

JOHN WORK GARRETT LIBRARY OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

ELIZABETH BAER, *Librarian*
SARAH E. FREEMAN, *Curator, Numismatics*



EVERGREEN HOUSE

4545 NORTH CHARLES STREET
BALTIMORE 10, MARYLAND

June 8, 1964

Mr. Eric P. Newman
Edison Brothers Stores, Inc.
400 Washington Avenue
St. Louis 2, Missouri

Dear Eric:

Thanks a lot for the reprint of your article on Nature Printing. I will have to agree that you seem to be right. There has not been time enough to read it through as yet, and I have turned it over to my colleague Miss Baer, who is equally, if not more so, interested from the point of view of illustrations and horticultural books. We are planning to catalogue it into our main library, and not hide it in numismatics.

As to your inquiry about the Nova Constellatio"s. The edges of all four of our pieces are ornamented. It is what I presume might be described as stylized laurel. They look more like stemless tulip blossoms with three long petals showing. I must admit that I do not know very much about technique, and have become hesitant about leading with my chin. However, I do not believe that they could all be from the same milling machine, unless there is some process by which the results of said machine can be reduced.

The "tulips" are identical in style on all four pieces. The size, however, of the individual three leaf group is noticeably smaller on the quints than on the mark, and more delicate still on the 100. This small piece is also considerably thinner, and somewhat thicker on one side, so that here the full width of the three petals isn't on the edge all the way around. This is a very amateurish description, but I hope you know what I mean.

Yours,

Sally

P.S. It's two petals - three lines. Sort of like this



June 10, 1964

Dr. Sarah Freeman
John Work Garrett Library
Evergreen House
4545 North Charles Street
Baltimore 10, Maryland

Dear Sally,

Thank you for your letter of June 8 about the edge ornamentation on your four Nova Constellatio pieces. Would you be nice enough to compare these to the edge ornamentation on the Continental Dollar. From your description it is possible that the twin leaf design found on the Continental Dollar may be the same as found on one of the Novas. It would be most advantageous for me to have this information.

I also believe there is a Washington President I Half Dollar made by Getz which has a leaf design on the edge and wonder if you have it. I know that you must have the design of the squares and circles on the edge but am not sure whether you have the leaf design piece.

I am sorry to ask all these technical questions but the nature of my research requires it.

Evelyn and I will probably be wandering to England later in the summer, where we have our camping car. We sleep in our car. I have an icebox and enjoy roughing it. Many people think we are out of our minds to forsake luxury for simplicity but the relief from reservations and timed itineraries is amazingly refreshing.

Thanks for your continued cooperation.

Cordially,

ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN/atb

JOHN WORK GARRETT LIBRARY OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

ELIZABETH BAER, *Librarian*
SARAH E. FREEMAN, *Curator, Numismatics*



EVERGREEN HOUSE

4545 NORTH CHARLES STREET
BALTIMORE 10, MARYLAND

June 12, 1964

Dear Eric:

I have spent half the morning squinting at the edges of various and sundry coins. Since I had to look up another thing to do with Continental Currency, I had gotten out your article, and must say your statement about the edge designs, made at that time, was not very accurate.

To sum up: there are no two alike. Except that the Constellations are consistent in design, but graduated in size. None of the others are at all like them, and there are at least four, possibly five different varieties on our five specimens of Continentals. Basically, they could all be described as leaf or wreath, but they differ radically in detail.

As I said in my other letter, this isn't really my field, and I am not familiar with the technicalities, and none of it is probably news to you, but I thought I noticed something interesting. All the Continentals have a circle of beads near the edge - the earliest are practically tangent to the edge. On the slightly later two (with CURRENCY), the beads farther in from the edge. On these first ones, there seems to be a definite relationship between the leaves and the beads. Of course you include the space between the beads too. But on No. 1, one set of leaves is $2\frac{1}{2}$ beads long. On No. 2, one finds two sets to three beads. Etc. And on one specimen, the beads are off for a short space, but actually show up as crescents on the outside edge, and there the leaves are almost off. It would thus appear that the design on the outside edge and the beads adjacent to the edge were put on in one operation. On those specimens in which the beading is set in farther, the leaf design on the edge is in much higher relief.

In addition to variations in size, the individual leaves have different shapes. On one specimen the pair are put together in a V shape; on another, one leaf is curved out and cut on the end so it looks like a crab claw, and on another the pairs of leaves resemble a series of capital N's laid end to end.

Our Washington's are all plain ~~ed~~, except the one with alternating circles and rectangles.

I've a feeling that you are going to quit asking me questions, for all I seem to do is add to the confusion.

Yours,

Sally

MEMORANDUM

August 4, 1964

To Don Taxay

FROM

Eric P. Newman

Thanks for the Nova Constellatio coinage memo about Greenwich. Even though I published this in the January 1960 Scrapbook, most of your discoveries are new to me.

Don't stop sending me data which you find.



EPN/atb

February 7, 1967

Mr. Ben E. Marlenee
821 Locust Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Mr. Marlenee:

It was very interesting to receive the coin you sent us in your letter of February 2, 1967. It purports to be a 1786 Nova Constellatio. There is no 1786 Nova Constellatio with US in script letters.

It so happens that a 1785 Nova Constellatio, Crosby Variety 4-C, was altered by changing the 5 into a 6 in the date. This altered coin was then used for the purpose of making an electrotpe and the electrotpe was copper plated.. The coin you sent us, therefore, and which is returned herewith, is a copper plated electrotpe of an altered date 1785 Nova Constellatio.

The electro weighs 125 $\frac{1}{2}$ grains and since it has a specific gravity of 9.65 it is, obviously, not made of copper.

If you examine the edge, just outside the S in LIBERTAS you can see the leaden electrotpe material where the copper plating has flaked off.

Your customer, therefore, should be told that not alone did he get a fraudulent coin, but he even got an electrotpe of the fraudulent coin.

We do not make any charge for our opinions, other than out-of-pocket expense, and you were nice to suggest a bill. We do, however, accept donations for continuing research and you can tell us your wishes with respect to the money you sent.

We hope we have been of service.

Sincerely yours,

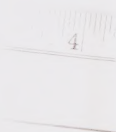
ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb
CERTIFIED MAIL









OKLAHOMA GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY
HORSESHOE LAKE STATION
HARRAH, OKLAHOMA

September 9, 1971

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On September 7, 1971, at the above location the following test was performed to determine the specific gravity of a Nova Constellatio Mark, in the possession of Robert J Navarre, Jr.

$$\text{Specific Gravity} = \frac{\text{Mass of Coin}}{\text{Mass of Equal Volume of H}_2\text{O @ 4}^\circ\text{C}}$$

A 50 ml beaker was completely filled with distilled water (at 76°F) and weighed on a Beam Balance. Its weight was 82.1 grams. The coin was then placed in the beaker and the overflow of water removed. This overflow volume being equal to the volume of the coin. The beaker with coin and water was then weighed; this weight being 89.55 grams.

The difference between the weights was 7.45. Therefore, the specific gravity is 7.45.

I certify the above statement to be true and correct.

Larry J Hatley

L J Hatley
Results Engineer
Oklahoma Gas & Electric Co

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

September 14, 1971

Mrs. Rita Navarro
Route 2, Box 81
Harrah, Oklahoma 73045

Dear Mrs. Navarro:

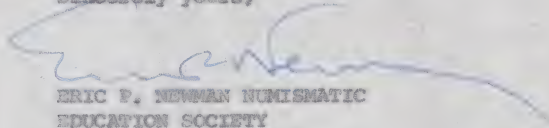
Thank you for your promptness in obtaining for us the photographs and specific gravity measurement of your Nova Constellatio Mark.

The specific gravity of 7.45 indicates that the piece is not made of silver but is made of zinc, tin, copper, antimony, or other like metals customarily used for casts and eletrotypes of coins. All of the genuine coins of this type will exceed 10 in specific gravity. Therefore, it now becomes certain that your piece is not an original.

It is surprising that after all the effort you have devoted to this piece that such a fundamental fact has not been brought out.

We are sorry that things did not turn out better for you.

Sincerely yours,



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/etb

THE *Numismatic Scrapbook*
MAGAZINE

SIDNEY NEWS BUILDING

SIDNEY, OHIO 45365



March 7, 1972

PHONE 513-492-4141

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri
63105

Dear Eric:

We appreciate your kind offer of September 16, 1971, to assist in reviewing the text of a proposed feature on the Nova Constellatio coinage.

Information has been gathered from several available sources including your fine feature which appeared in the Scrapbook in January 1960.

It occurred to us that rather than quote extensively from your previous story, or to write under a dual by-line, you might prefer to use our available material plus additional information you may have, to rewrite your story.

Even in cases where there are controversies or previous inaccurate statements, they could be quoted, with your own remarks pinpointing the inaccuracies.

Doubtless 12 years have widened available knowledge of these pieces and interest continues high on this subject.

Gene Hessler from the Chase Manhattan Bank Money Museum has made available a photo of a 1,000 unit (mark) electrotpe in the museum, the only piece in their collection.

Should you not be able to undertake the project at this time, we will understand.

Thank you for your interest in Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine.

With warmest personal regards,

Cordially,

Russell Rulau
Editor

/jmb

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

March 13, 1972

Mr. Russell Rulau, Editor
The Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine
Sidney News Building
Sidney, Ohio 45365

Dear Russ:

Pursuant to our telephone conversation, I believe it is best for me not to be a co-author of what might be published on the Nova Constellatio matter. I will gladly help any way I can and will review whatever your writers might wish to develop.

In the meantime, I am enclosing the printed pictures of the silver pieces. It would not be wise for you to photo an electrotpe.

If the enclosed photos cannot be used, then I am sure Johns Hopkins University can furnish photos of their pieces.

Kindest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

THE *Numismatic Scrapbook*
MAGAZINE

SIDNEY NEWS BUILDING

SIDNEY, OHIO 45365



April 6, 1972

PHONE 513-492-4141

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri
63105

Dear Eric:

Some time ago you kindly offered to review our Nova Constellatio feature before it appears in print.

We are enclosing a copy of it, and will appreciate your attention to it. Please feel free to revise, or edit, or to eliminate redundant or incorrect information. We would like to pinpoint the location of the silver pieces at this time; if you have one and do not want to be identified, we could say "MidWest collector" or some such.

Any recent information on the pieces you may have would also be a boost to the story, I am sure.

I'll keep in mind your request for additional data on cutting Spanish coins in the U.S. As it turns up, I'll send it on.

With warmest personal regards,

Cordially,

NUMISMATIC SCRAPBOOK MAGAZINE


Russell Rulau
Editor

/jmb

Encls.

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

April 12, 1972

Mr. Russell Rulau
Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine
Sidney News Building
Sidney, Ohio 45365

Dear Russ:

The article you sent on the Nova Constellatio has a lot of content which will be of interest to the public. However, there are a number of major and lots of minor corrections which I will make in the manuscript and I thought that your team could help on one item particularly, namely, the prices on page 11. I believe that all of the copper pieces sold do not have the decimal point in the right place for the price. They are \$1.00 instead of \$100.00. They are \$1.12 instead of \$112.00, etc. This is obvious because the silver pieces sold for \$70.00, etc.

I want your advice as to whether I should indicate that I own a silver piece. To put "owned by a midwestern collector" only starts inquiry. My thought is one might as well give the background of the piece and its owner as accurately as possible. Since many people know that I have a few coins and that they are kept in bank vaults, do you think I increase the risk of burglary or robbery?

Kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,



ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

THE

Numismatic Scrapbook MAGAZINE

SIDNEY NEWS BUILDING

SIDNEY, OHIO 45365



April 14, 1972

PHONE 513-492-4141

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri
63105

Dear Eric:

It was a pleasure speaking to you yesterday.

Please find enclosed herewith the following:

Prints from our negatives to match the cutlines which you have already.

Pertinent pages from the October 28, 1867, Joseph J. Mickley sale by W. Elliot Woodward.

Two references from the American Journal of Numismatics, one of which contains the Adams-Haseltine notation.

The Coin World story which you were interested in appeared on January 26, 1972, page 62. We will send you a tearsheet if you do not locate it.

We appreciate your encouraging words on the appearance of the story. We hope it is truly a worthwhile addition to Colonial numismatics of the United States.

With warmest personal regards,

Cordially,

NUMISMATIC SCRAPBOOK MAGAZINE


Russell Rulau
Editor

/jmb

Encls.

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

June 25, 1973

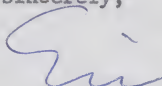
Mr. James Spilman
P. O. Box 4411
Huntsville, Alabama 35802

Dear Jim:

RF 52 (Apr. 1973) Colonial Newsletter

I wrote up this matter in the NSM in January, 1960 p. 6 but had not then located the data in the English papers. Enclosed is that data. It shows Birmingham was the source. The person who wrote it must have known what he was talking about as he was correcting others.

Sincerely,



ERIC P. NEWMAN

EPN:jah

Encls.

Bowers & Ruddy Galleries, Inc.

6922 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 600, Los Angeles, California 90028
Telephone: (213) 466-4595, or toll free outside California (800) 421-4224
Telex: 69-1555 Photograde LSA



May 25, 1979

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63105

Dear Eric,

It was a pleasure to talk with you on Thursday. Over the next few weeks I will be sending you information as per our discussion.

I will send you under separate cover this week the following three coins for your commentary:

1. The Higley threepence, our inventory no. 93, with legend THE WHEEL GOES ROUND. When returning this please register it at a value of \$30,000.*
2. 1787? Brasher "Lima" doubloon, our inventory no. 196. Please register this for \$10,000.
3. 1852/1 \$20, Augustus Humbert, our inventory no. 1769. Please register this for \$20,000.

On further thought, I will enclose a few other items which we did not mention: these will be our inventory nos. 197 through 202 inclusive and consists of six pieces which bear "E B" counterstamps, some of which may pertain to Brasher. This entire group can be registered for \$5,000 when returning it.

Can you acknowledge receipt of these when you get them?

While knowledge of our having acquired for auction the Garrett Collection is fairly common throughout the coin field, no official announcement has been made. We are awaiting the timing suggested by the University trustees in this regard. So, I ask you to keep in confidence for the moment the fact you have these pieces - if you do discuss them, please be judicious.

Concerning your thoughts about the Lima piece the truth is what counts - not how the public will feel about it. If you feel that the piece is not authentic then by all means say so. On the other hand, if the coin does have a clean bill of health then it would be wise to state this as well. It would seem to me that the signature on the piece would be very helpful in this regard. If the punches conform precisely to the signature on the regular 1787 Brasher doubloons, then this

Your Friends in the Rare Coin Business
Established 1953

** for this + the others I will re-invoice you, if correct*

r. Eric P. Newman

Page 2

would be a point in the Lima piece's favor.

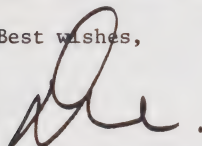
It would seem to me also that if non-destructive testing of metal content could be accomplished, it could be determined what alloys and trace elements in addition to gold would be present in the coin. I imagine that in 1787 the alloy would not be precise. If such a test showed that the piece had an alloy that conformed to the later United States Mint standard for gold coins, this would indicate to me that coin gold was used, possibly from a melted-down United States issue, and the piece would be suspicious. Perhaps you could think of other tests.

Any information that you furnish to me, Eric, will be given appropriate credit in the manner that you wish.

I am sending along with this letter copies of the Guttag presentation of the 1783 "bit". When John Work Garrett acquired the Colonel John W. Ellsworth Collection in March 1923 he acquired a duplicate of this piece. As he needed only one, the other was sold through Wayne Raymond, who handled many of his duplicates, to Julius Guttag, who offered it for sale.

Keep in touch and let me know what you come up with. I very, very much appreciate your help and interest!

Best wishes,



Q. David Bowers

QDB/eg

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GUTTAG BROS.
FOREIGN MONEY AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE
 BULLION AND SPECIE
 FOREIGN & UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BONDS
 BROKERS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE
 52 WALL STREET, NEW YORK

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Rates Subject to fluctuation

SELLERS

*NOTES	**GOLD	SILVER	COPPER NICKEL
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COIN BULLETIN

May 2nd, 1923.

THE MOST INTERESTING COIN OF THE ENTIRE U. S. SERIES.

"THE CENT"

OBVERSE: An eye forming the center of a glory
of 13 points, the points intersecting
a circle of 13 stars.
Legend: "Nova Constellatio."
Border: Beaded.

REVERSE: A wreath enclosing the letters "U.S." and the figures "100." The document is the property of the University and may not be reproduced without the permission of the University.

METAL: Silver.

SIZE: Size of a dime.

There are many coins which dealers call very rare and extremely rare, but the coin we describe herein is practically unique as it is the only one obtainable at any price. It is far more desirable than the ERASHER Doubloon or 1822 Half Eagle. We consider it the gem of the entire United States Series as it is the foundation upon which the present decimal coinage was raised.

A postage stamp sold recently for about \$35,000.-- in comparison to which, from every view point, this coin should be worth \$100,000. Of course, we do not expect to obtain a price anything like the price of the stamp referred to, but we feel sure that at some future date, this piece will bring more than the rarest postage stamp.

We are going to give everyone in the United States the same chance to buy this rarity, and, therefore, we shall not sell it until May 23rd, three weeks from above date. If you are interested we should be pleased to hear from you before that date, thus giving everyone interested a chance to communicate with us and get our price.

THE FIRST COIN MINTED FOR THE GOVERNMENT
of the
UNITED STATES
THE FIRST COIN TO BEAR THE LETTERS
"U. S."

GUTTAG'S FOREIGN CURRENCY & EXCHANGE GUIDE 1132 PAGE, CLOTH, \$1.50
* RATE GOING ON! \$ BOOK, JULIA ILLUSTRATED PAPER COVER, 124 P. SEAMIE \$1.40



WESTERN PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.

January 8, 1980

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63150

Dear Eric:

What do you think of the gospel according to John Ford?
He sure put everything into it. Now if the new coin is just
genuine, I'll have to agree that the find is sensational.

This is the copper piece that I asked you about some months
ago. He did not describe it very well to me, and I since then
dismissed it as another of his pipe dreams.

I do not have a photo yet, but want to study the die work very
carefully. The CW illustration looks good, but it is hardly
enough for this kind of a discovery.

Your opinion will be valued highly to help determine if the
new piece should be added to the Red Book.

I also need some advice on the Gloucester token. Breen states
that the legend is unquestionably RIG.....DAWSON. Can you tie
this to any kind of a name beginning with RIG in Gloucester
around 1714?

Any help on the above will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

WESTERN PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.

Kenneth E. Bressett, Manager
Whitman Coin Products

KEB/bf

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

January 28, 1980

Mrs. Margo Russell
Coin World
P. O. Box 150
Sidney, Ohio 45365

Dear Margo:

In your request for the pedigree for the 100 mill Nova plain edge, I believe I can be of some help. Perhaps you can suggest more of what you wish as to other episodes of the Nova matter where I might have something to add.

The CW January 9, 1980 articles on the Nova matters were fascinating and I know your readers appreciate how much work went into their preparation. It merits several rereadings to digest. I am glad the "genius" matter was cleared up.

I might point out that the Numismatic Scrapbook of July 25, 1972 (under your ownership) has an article ghost written by Russell Rulau which was not mentioned in the CW resource listing and which contained some data which apparently was not included in the CW writeup.

You may be able to help me develop facts as to the 100 mill plain edge as I have a heavy amount of business work at this particular time.

Please find out for me what price lot 905 went for at the sale of the John G. Murdock Estate Sale of July 21-29, 1903 in London by Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge. My catalog has no prices written in.

Are you interested in some evidence that the Birmingham 1783 copper Novas were apparently made in 1785?

Are you interested in another probably unique Nova copper piece which is probably a "circulating counterfeit" I had found in Washington, D. C. many years ago? Taxay includes it in his opus. It was not illegal.

Do you want to publish the enclosed advertisement for the sale of the 100 mill plain edge? This came from Garrett's file thru Bowers & Ruddy.

As to the 5 mill copper, who is the French collector? Who is the English dealer? Are these being withheld and, if so, why?

Are you interested in the fact that the first pattern coinage of the independent U. S. is still the 1776 Continental Dollars and that the Novas were distinguished in your article as being "authorized"?

Please check the beginning date of the Articles of Confederation as I thought it was 1777, or did it have to be ratified. Your article says 1781.

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

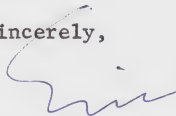
Mrs. Margo Russell
January 28, 1980
Page 2 -

Are you interested in the fact that I feel that the Robert Morris notes of 1780 are U.S. government money? I wrote this up in The Numismatist in 1977.

I look forward to hearing from you. Let's talk about it if that is more practical.

Thank you for your very kind letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric P. Newman", with a stylized, flowing script.

Eric P. Newman

jah

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

January 28, 1980

Mr. Kenneth Bressett
Western Publishing Co.
1220 Mound Avenue
Racine, WI 53404

Dear Ken:

5 Mill Nova Constellatio

Your letter dated January 8, 1980 asks for my opinion as to above piece as described in the Coin World of January 9 (misdated January 2, 1980). Your letter just arrived because the zip code was 63150 instead of 63105 and thus went to the First National Bank in St. Louis. So we start out erroneously.

You praised the CW presentation in your letter to the editor as published in the Jan. 30, 1980 CW. I immediately called Margot up to inquire about the "genius" reference, but that has been clarified by a letter to the editor.

As to the 5 mill I have normal inquiries. I have never seen the piece but Picker has. He sent me a picture of it. It was offered to him in 1978 and he wanted a return privilege if it was not genuine. He made an offer but it was not accepted. He did not advise me of that event until after the Garrett sale.

There are a few things which I would like clarified:

1. Who is the French collector and what other American pieces did he have? What are the details of the sale to the British dealer?
2. Who is the English dealer who "discovered" it? I am amazed a piece like this would be sold at private sale before announcement of its discovery when it probably could have brought more if others knew about its existence.
3. Why does the coin have three dots before the 5? That is very odd. The AJN of Oct. 1875 and Crosby quotes the Curwen diary as "U.S.....5.....1783".

The 100 and 500 mills have no dots. Why does this one have dots?

4. The number of dies has never been clear to me. If there was an odd die made for the second quint, could the copper piece use one of the same dies as the silver quint. Perhaps the odd quint die was not turned over to Morris. Perhaps the copper piece had to be a different size than any of the silver pieces.

Please give me what you think should be studied further.

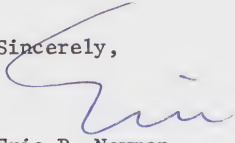
The discovery of this coin is an amazing event and I'll talk it over with you whenever you wish.

Margo has asked me to give information on the plain edge 100 mill piece.

Mr. Kenneth Bressett
January 28, 1980
Page 2 -

Margo has asked what other Nova comments I have. I'll cooperate, but won't get into any controversy.

Sincerely,



Eric P. Newman

jah



WESTERN PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.

January 31, 1980

Mr. Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric:

Thanks for your letter and comments. I appreciate the work you have done on the Gloucester Shilling, even though it is still a mystery.

You asked Margo about the price realized for lot number 905 of the 1903 Murdock sale. It sold for £26. A copy of the page is enclosed. The catalog states that the date of this sale was "Tuesday, the 31st day of March, 1903, and Four following Days".

The amount of publicity that the Nova Constellatio "five" has received, and the important nature of the piece make it necessary to list it in the Guide Book, unless there is a serious question about its origin.

Picker seems to be the only person who has examined it and he could see nothing wrong with it. Breen thinks it is O.K.; Bowers will not comment without studying it. I have not yet received pictures, but Picker has promised to send some.

Until something new develops I feel that this discovery should be listed with the other Nova patterns. I plan to include the following, or some similar wording: "The enigmatic copper "five" was first brought to the attention of collectors in 1980".

If you have any other thoughts or suggestions please tell me what you think would be the best way to handle the situation.

Sincerely,

WESTERN PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC.


Kenneth E. Bressett, Manager
Whitman Coin Products

KEB/bf

Enc. 1220 Mound Avenue/Racine, Wisconsin 53404/Telephone (414) 633-2431

10	897	Others of 1818, 1821, 1822 and 1825, <i>the first two very fine and the last two fine</i>	4	Chapman
9	898	Half Dollars of 1818, 1831 (small letters), 1834, 1836, 1853 and 1856, <i>the first two very fine, the remainder fine</i>	6	— do —
10	899	Others of 1831 (small letters), 1873, 1876, 1877 (m. m. s.), 1879, 1891, 1893 (Columbian) and 1900, <i>all but one (1877) in mint state</i>	9	— do —

PROOFS AND PATTERNS.

1 6	900	Proofs of the Quarter Dollars of 1831, 1860, 1861, 1862 and 1863, <i>brilliant</i>	5	— do —
11	901	Others of 1862 and 1865; and Patterns corresponding with the first three Half Dollars (1869) in lot 885, <i>all brilliant</i>	5	Gatters
11	902	Three Patterns corresponding with the last three Half Dollars (1870) in lot 885; and Proofs of 1870, 1871 and 1872, <i>brilliant</i>	6	— do —
10	903	Proof Quarter Dollars, 1873 (plain), 1873 (with arrow heads by the date), 1875, 1879 (2), 1880, 1882 and 1883, <i>all brilliant</i>	8	Spink
13	904	Others, dated 1884, 1885 (2), 1887, 1888, 1889, 1898 (2) and 1902; also a Proof TWENTY CENTS of 1875, <i>all brilliant</i>	10	Gatters.

DIMES.

26	905	An eye in the centre of radiations, within a circle of stars, NOVA CONSTELLATIO; <i>rev. U.S. 100</i> within a wreath LIBERTAS JUSTITIA 1783, <i>very fine and extremely rare</i> [Pl. VII]	1	Chapman
		* * "One of the rarest American coins."—J.G.M.		
4 4	906	Dime, 1896, bust of Liberty to the right; <i>rev. eagle upon clouds, within a wreath, in brilliant mint state and exceedingly rare thus</i>	1	Brichelson
2 2	907	Another, not quite so fine, and showing cracks in the dies, <i>fine and rare</i>	1	— do —
1 4	908	Another, very similar to the last, <i>and in the same condition</i>	1	— do —
1 7	909	Another, dated 1798 (8 over 7), and a poor specimen of 1801, <i>the first is fine</i>	2	— do —
3 10	910	Others of 1802 and 1803, <i>the latter fine</i>	2	Andrews
1 7	911	Others, dated 1805 and 1807, <i>the first good, and the last in almost mint condition</i>	2	— do —
18	912	Dimes of 1814, 1820, 1823, and 1824, <i>the first two very fine, the others good</i>	4	Spink
13	913	Others, dated 1814, 1820, 1827, 1828, 1829 and 1830, <i>very fine</i>	6	Chapman
12	914	Others of 1830, 1831, 1832, 1834, 1835, and 1836, <i>mostly very fine</i>	6	Seltman
9	915	Others of 1837, 1838, 1841, 1853, 1854, 1856 (2), 1862, 1875 (2), 1882, 1883, 1886, 1888, 1889, 1892, and 1900* (2)	18	Spink

Bit
Plain edge

early
pedigree
unknown

John G. Murdoch, ~~collection~~

John W. Garrett in 1903

Waldo C. Newcomer in 1925 1923

Edward H. R. Green in 1931 or 1932

Bardette B. Johnson + Eric P. Newman in 194

Eric P. Newman ~~collection~~

APN NES

Wayte Raymond 1923
Kuttig Bros 1923

Floral edge bit

T. F. Cloud

Scotch Dealer

Edward Shorthouse

Elst Woodward 1885

Pamela

Byron Johnson
606 N W 80th
Seattle, Wash 98107

Eric Newman

Dear Eric,

Russ Rulau forwarded on to me a copy of your letter asking about my article on the Continental dollar.

As you suspected it is a literary exercise. The original title of the article which Russ changed was "Symposium" which you will recall has the double meaning of a drinking party and a discussion. My tastes in numismatics are catholic but naturally I study pieces I have first and foremost. Several years ago I started a file of references to the Continental dollar. No one article seemed to me to answer all the questions I had. And the absence of official documentation lent a mystery. So I thought it would be interesting to present all the material in one place. The dialogue style as used by Plato seemed interesting. In Miami in 1967 at the ANA I talked with Al Hoch and Cliff Hishler about the idea. Al of course is a Colonial nut as you know and he was enthusiastic. So after three years of thinking about it I finally typed it up from my 3x5 cards. Al had wanted me to send it in to the Colonial Newsletter but to me the article didn't seem august enough. I made one humorous remark about Maury Gould in the article so since I was attending the NASC convention in Feb 1970 I took the article along for Maury to see since he always likes a little joke about himself. Russ Rulau was also at the show and Maury after reading it said give it to Russ for the Scrapbook. After a rewrite there it was. Courtney Goffing tells me the rest of the article will be in the July issue. At least he said they had just finished setting it in type and this was at the COIN show just over so assume July issue.

Though I have not acknowledged it there have been some names that were picked more or less deliberately. For instance when the barmaid asks who pays for this round the name Helen came to mind. Glenn S or Pittman or others who drink heartily at conventions can give you her last name. But of course all is just one speaker- me- and I am to blame for all the errors. I tried to have the individual speakers pick up the mistakes the other speakers make in the article but probably missed a few.

I thank you for the information that Everett Sipsey was not always accurate.

All in all the article which gave me many pleasant hours of relaxation from business cares was meant for just personal enjoyment. The fun of putting it together was much more than could be realized from publishing it. I did not mean to criticize anyone. I did mean to cast doubt on established

theories where they were just theories. Most of all I wanted to find out all about my poor old tin dollar.

I blush when someone of your abilities calls some of my pretend people well informed. I do admit to having a fair size library and even read some of the stuff sometimes. I couldn't afford the ANS card file but sometimes wish I had it so I could find things.

I liked your last sentence- "I wish I had been in on the discussion". I wish that we had such discussions nowadays. Much of the actual things I know I got firsthand much as I suspect you did from oldtime dealer Johnson. I knew for instance of a clipped Brashear doubloon, from reading of it in my library. From barroom discussion I knew it was clipped to make a half- doubloon. After the article was printed I was told the name of the dealer which I had not known definitely before.

I would be happy to answer any questions about the article if I can. My fondest wish of course would be for maybe James Risk to shoot us all down by finding out the true story. You'll excuse me I hope. I was at Detroit in 62 at that most interesting forum. I know you like a little joke since I heard- again in a barroom-about your wall-paper selection for your powder room. By now you realize that I have a retentive memory for gossip.

I don't know how it happened but I have never met you. Will have to remedy that. I will be at St Louis and look forward to seeing you, and I assume your rarities. Though the Coin World delivered today lists some of the ANA exhibits I didn't see one of yours listed. Hope to see the silver Continental, and the Confederate issue, etc.

I'll be at the convention all week and will probably be in the bar with Randy Zander, Jim Budd, Tom Becker, and a few other drinking buddies.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Byron", written in dark ink.

100 Mill Nova

W. Elliot Woodward's 83rd Sale

the J. S Twining Collection

Apr 27, 1886

Lot 1064 But or 100 units

Size 11 27 grains almost

Leafwork on edge Illustrated on Plate

Says it was offered in Addenda of
75th Sale with starting limit of \$550⁰⁰

Withdrawn when no bid that high. Now
offered without limit

Low illustrated

Edward Shorthouse ^{of Birmingham} Ed Frossard Auction
May 20, 1886 (non-numismatic)

Dec 6, 1889 ← SH & H Chapman
no silver Novas

Joseph V. Muckley Sale 10/28/67 "not silver, but some soft metal"
Lots 2338 1000 mill lead cast lot by Appleton
2339 500 mill lead cast lot by Appleton.

Numis

James W Ellsworth 38-373 July 1925
Born 1849 Died June 2, 1925, Collection sold to NY dealer in 1925.
included Novas in silver, two 1804 dollars, Brasher

Numis

Waldo C Newcomer 47-569 (Sept 1934)
Died July 29, 1934 Born 1866 Baltimore banker Sold US portion of
collection in 1931. Was burglarized in 1913

Murdoch x

Numis

John W. Garrett 55-605 1942 Aug
Born 1872 Died June 6, 1942 Father was T. Harrison Garrett
who was a collector also John by will left his collection
~~to John Harrison~~

John H. Murdoch Sale

by Sathby Wilkinson + edge July 21, 1903

#905 An Eye in the centre of radiations
within a circle of stars. NOVA CONSTELLATION
REV. U.S. 100 within a wreath. LIBERTAS
~~AMERICAN~~ JUSTITIA 1783

Very fine and extremely rare (Pl VIII)

"One of the rarest American coins" J.G.M. 11

Wayte Raymond told me John Garrett bought
this coin. Then Garrett bot 1000, 500, 500, 100
mill pieces from Ellsworth (ex Parmelee) or Woodward
He took the Parmelee 100 mill being the
best + gave the Murdoch ^{piece} to Raymond to
sell. Raymond sold it to Newcomer who
sold it to Green through Mall then
to B.D. Johnson then to Fred Newcomer

The Murdoch-Garrett-Newcomer-Green-Johnson
Newcomer piece is identified by the
planchet dent ^{pointing to the piece} above the V in JUSTITIA.

- 901 Others of 1862 and 1865 ; and Patterns corresponding with the first three Half Dollars (1869) in lot 885, *all brilliant* 5
- 902 Three Patterns corresponding with the last three Half Dollars (1870) in lot 885 ; and Proofs of 1870, 1871 and 1872, *brilliant* 6
- 903 Proof Quarter Dollars, 1873 (plain), 1873 (with arrow heads by the date), 1875, 1879 (2), 1880, 1882 and 1883, *all brilliant* 8
- 904 Others, dated 1884, 1885 (2), 1887, 1888, 1889, 1898 (2) and 1902 ; also a Proof TWENTY CENTS of 1875, *all brilliant* 10

DIMES.

- 905 An eye in the centre of radiations, within a circle of stars, NOVA CONSTELLATIO ; *rev.* U.S. 100 within a wreath LIBERTAS JUSTITIA 1783, *very fine and extremely rare* [Pl. VII] 1

* * "One of the rarest American coins."—J.G.M.

- 906 Dime, 1896, of Liberty to the right ; *rev.* eagle upon clouds, within a wreath *in brilliant mint state and exceedingly rare thus* 1
- 907 Another, not so fine, and showing cracks in the dies, *fine and* 1

*John H. Mendenhall Collection
Sale Jan. 21-22, 1903, London
Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge.*

my 1786 Nova Const
is from

5541 Jenks Sale
of Chapman
illustrated

A J N

Apr
1885 Vol 19 p 81

Parmelee owns 1000, 500, 500. Auction sale of Scotch collection ^{Sold in Glasgow} Scotland had bid
 sold to dealer for £15 15s. Dealer offered it to English collector who sent it to America. It
 was returned with an offer and bought by Woodward.

A J N

Apr. 1887 Vol 21 p 82

Edward Shorthouse of Birmingham was the collector who sent the
 100 mill to Woodward.

Existence ^{of 100 mill} suspected since Michley sale of 1867 according to
 Shorthouse.

Sold at 1886 Woodward sale to Parmelee for \$272.00

Originally bought for 2/3 from a London pawnbroker,
 T. F. Cloud.

A J N

July 1890 p 30

At Parmelee Sale the four silver Novas were bought
 by Harlan P. Smith for \$1350. It didn't say for
 whom he bid but it probably was

Crosby is ^{there} said to know of another 1000 mill piece
 in not as good condition but this was hearsay. It would
 have been the 100 mill piece of Murdoch, but that's a guess

Numisma March 1885 Ed Frossard, editor
announced the "discovery" of the $\frac{1}{10}$ th mark or 100 mill
piece ~~Woo~~ by W. E. Woodward in Scotland.
Frossard examined it. It had a floreated edge.
Withdrawn by Woodward from April 2, 1885 Sale.
Parmelee bought it at the Woodward Sale of

~~April 2, 1885~~

~~Withdrawn~~ Sale
W. E. Woodward Apr 26, 1886 ~~for \$27.00~~

Picture of reverse in 1886 sale

Picture of obverse in 1885 sale from which it was withdrawn

Early owners of

Nova 1000 mills
500 mills

described in Mason's Can Collector's Log

July 1872

mostly a guide of the Nathaniel Wilson letter

also Crosby

the 1873 list of the ~~Parmelee~~ (Seavey Collection)
but by Parmelee has no Silver Novas

^{Parmelee}
The ~~#~~ 6/25/90 Sale #580 1000 proof
581 500 proof
set sold for 582 500 no legend vk. proof
\$1350.00 583 100 proof

Feb 2. 1954 - At lunch with Wayne Raymond in New York he told me that John W. Garrett bought the 100 mill Nova in 1903 at the Hurdock sale. When in 1923 Garrett bought the set of 4 Novas from Ellsworth he asked Raymond to sell the second 100 mill piece. Raymond sold it to Newcomer. Then Newcomer to Green to Johnson to Newman.

(This omits Guttag. The date 1925 should be 1923)

Letter from Robert Morris to Thomas Jefferson May 1, 1784 sent coin to Jefferson

Jefferson of turned over the coins
to Charles Thomson

Memo of Jefferson in his diary
dated May 11, 1784

" left with C. Thomson as specimen
of coins 108 D "

5.11.1784

Lulu

Nova Constellation 4/2/72

Please make these changes. The word unit is better than mill even though I am accustomed to using the word mill

- p 11 line 2 mill to unit (twice)
p 13 second to last line " " "
p 14 ~~line 11~~, ~~line 12~~ change mill to unit in 6 places
p 14 line 9 add comma after "coins"

Emerson

I hope we can improve the layout for my ownership table. How about this?

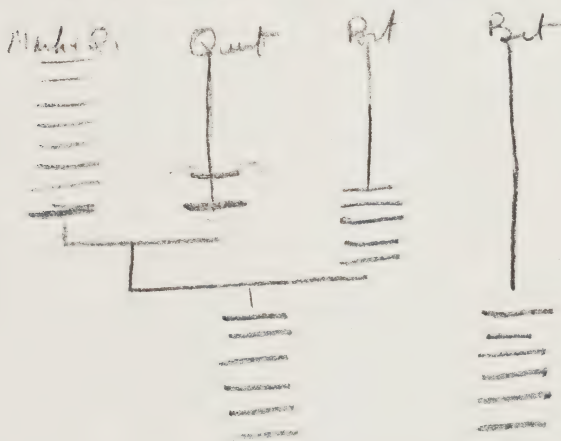


TABLE OF OWNERSHIP OF UNITED STATES 1783 NOVA CONSTELLATIO SILVER PATTERN

Mark
and
Quint
with legend

Quint
with legend

Bit
with fluted
edge

Bit
with plain
edge

Charles Thomson, 1783
(Secy of Continental Congress,
Philadelphia)

John Thomson
(Nephew of Charles Thomson,
Newark, Delaware)

Samuel E. Thomson
(Grand nephew of Charles
Thomson, Newark, Del.)

Rathmell Wilson
(Philadelphia)

John W. Hareltone, 1872
(Philadelphia coin dealer)

Henry S. Adams, 1874
(Boston)

Sylvester S. Crosby, 1873
(Boston numismatic researcher
and collector)

Lorin G. Parmelee, before 1883
(Boston)

Harlan P. Smith, 1890
(New York City coin dealer)

S. H. & H. Chapman
(Philadelphia coin dealers)

James W. Ellsworth, 1901
(American diplomat)

John W. Barrett, 1925-1928
(Baltimore)

Johns Hopkins University, 1942
(Baltimore)

T. W. Cloud
(London pawnbroker)

Glasgow, Scotland
collector

Edward Shorthouse, 1835
(Manchester, England)

W. Elliot Woodward, 1885
(Boston coin dealer)

Lorin G. Parmelee, 1886
(Boston)

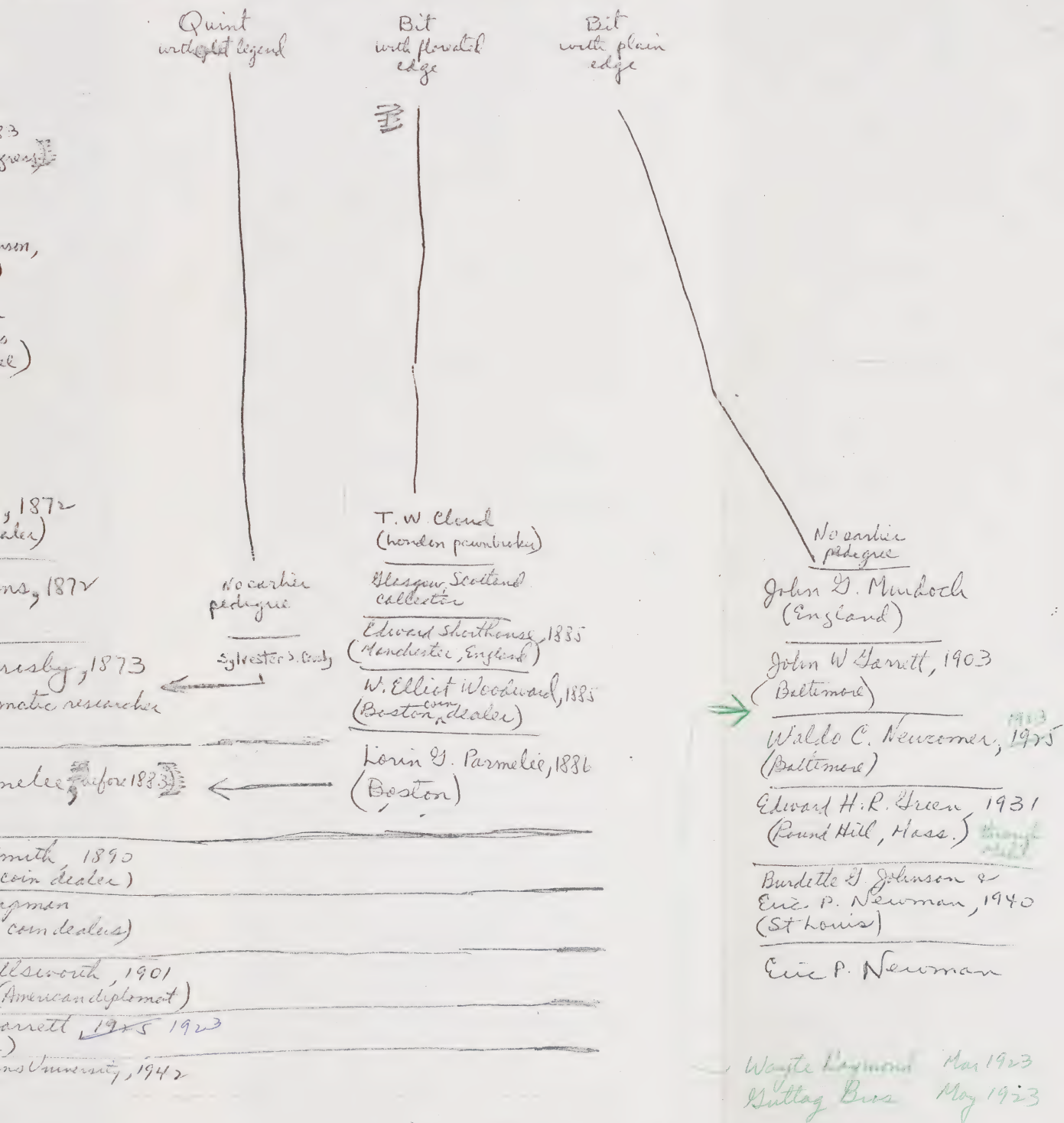
No earlier
pedigree

Sylvester S. Crosby

←

←

TABLE OF OWNERSHIP OF UNITED STATES 1783 NOVA CONSTELLATIO SILVER PATTERNS



"under official auspices" Ford

Return on 10 of CW Jan 9, 1980 (1/2/80)
leaves out ^{and} Num Scrap July 25, ~~1978~~
1972 by Russ Rulan on Nova

from Picker

Mar 1967

Nova Constellatio Die trial on large plandinet

Or 4-D. 1785 vf. 290 grains

Horizontal Diameter $1 \frac{7}{16}$ "

Vertical Diameter $1 \frac{15}{32}$ "

photo taken

Bought in England by Picker

The 100 mill Nova in Stone
came from

T. F. ~~Cloud~~, a London Jew. broker,
for 254.3d

to ~~Scott~~ dealer
then ~~Ed~~ ^{Ed} Short house of Birmingham

to W. E. Woodward

Sale 73

Apr 1885

Addenda #1 Plate

Sale 83

1886

— Plate

very heavy
from Scotland

This went to Parmelee 583

✓ to H. P. Smith who sold to
Ellsworth in 1906
to Garrett

The second piece is

Mundock — to Garrett

Both are not in ~~L~~ ~~II~~

~~See what payment told me.~~

Nova Constellatus

Crosby
5-~~12~~

LARGE PLANCHET

Diameter $1 \frac{15}{32}$ "

Wt 280 grains

Condition only good - date not readable
Apparently a trial piece.

Belongs to Stacks

The 5 mill Nova ^{the diary does not say} ^{copper} ³⁷⁴²
was given by Judge Josiah Bartlett
to Samuel Curmeen in London
in May 1784.

Given May, 1957 Numismatist

This stamp proves to be
a 1783 Nova ^{produced by}
England

To President of Congress

"Office of Finance, April 23, 1783.¹

"Sir:--On the 21st of February, 1782, Congress were pleased to approve of the establishment of a mint, and to direct the superintendent of finance to prepare and report a plan for conducting it. This matter has been delayed by various circumstances until the present moment. I now enclose specimens of a coin, with a view that if Congress should think proper to appoint a committee on the subject, I may have the honor of conferring with them and explaining my ideas of the plan for establishing and conducting a mint. Such plan when reported by a committee will more probably meet the ideas of Congress than any which I might prepare.

"I have the honor to be, &c.,

"Robert Morris."

¹Wharton's Diplomatic Correspondence, vol. vi., p. 392

*Copied from Dr. Watson History of American Coinage.
p 13*

To President / Congress

"Office of Finance, April 23, 1783.¹

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"I have the honor to be, &c.,

"Robert Morris."

¹Wharton's Diplomatic Correspondence, vol. vi., p. 392

On Monies, Coins, Weights and Measures,
proposed for the United States of America
By John Beale Bordley (1727-1804)

Philadelphia, Printed by Daniel Humphreys, in Front Street
near the Drawbridge 1789

p.12

COPPER COINS

A TREATISE on copper coin, as far as I know, is a new thing. There are reasons why these coins ought to be limited in their power. If they were to have the power to sink debts, as gold and silver have, they would be used vexatiously; and that would affect credits. Even if the forcing them in payments should be confined to 5 per cent. of debts, or be at all allowed of, it would have that tendency; and a creditor receiving a debt of 10,000 dollars, each cent thereof weighing 140 grains, at 5 per centum, would be burdened with 500 dollars worth, that is 50,000 pieces of copper of the weight of 1000 avoirdupois pounds; which selling as old copper, although it be at 20 cents a pound, would make a loss of 20,000 cents on his whole claim; and moreover would burden him with cartage, storage, and expences of sales; so that near 3 per cent. of his debt would be lost: which would affect commerce, especially with foreigners. An ordinance of the late Congress, enacts that the treasury, and if I rightly understand it, the proprietors of bullion carried to the mint, shall be paid 5 per cent. of their claims in copper cents. Ought those who carry bullion to the mint, to be burdened with inconvenience?

It is said, the late Congress contracted for copper, to be coined at their mint and issued as above; and their ordinance seems to intend that the public mint shall have the coining of copper cents. It is proper it should be so, exclusively. Having found from the report of a committee of the General Assembly of New York, in 1787, that the best red copper in sheets costs, at the factories in England, 11d sterling a pound; on which they

John Beale Bordley (moved to Phila. in 1791)
was from Maryland. (He lived on Wye Island)
and came often to Phila. after he married a Mifflin
in 1776.

Pa. Mag. of Hist. & Biography, Vol. LXVI, 1. c. 414
p. 410-415

This confirms his authorship of "On Monies, Coins,
Weights & Measures".

say the charges are 20 to 25 per cent. and that copper in mass, or old copper to be melted into ingots and drawn into sheets in the plating mills costs 9d sterling - charges included, I thereon make an estimate of the cost in coining copper cents, of 50 to the pound of copper, for a dollar worth 50d. sterling, thus: for a pound of copper, 24 cents; coining, 12 cents; together 36 cents, the cost. The pound of copper so coined passes for 50 cents. - The ordinance of the late Congress says, $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of copper shall be coined into 100 cents, (for a dollar of the value of $52d. \frac{46}{100}$ sterling value) at which rate each cent weighs $157\frac{1}{2}$ grains. The old English halfpennies, I suspect, weigh about 166 grains. I have one which weighs 156 grains and appears to be true Tower coin, such as were not uncommon fifty years since; it is, however, so worn that the impressions are nearly lost: it therefore may be presumed that it weighed 8 or 10 grains more when new: the Britannia side is quite smooth - the other side faintly shows the impression of a head or heads in the manner of a William and Mary halfpence. The New-York committee further report, that 46 genuine British halfpence, when new, weigh 1 lb. avoirdupois, each piece 146 grains; 60 Birmingham coppers, are 1 lb. or 116 $\frac{1}{2}$ grains each: and $46 \frac{4}{10}$ genuine Jersey coppers are 1 lb. or 151 grains, each."

The thought entertained by some of making the copper cent to be of intrinsic value, is alarming; as it threatens a design to enforce a base and cumbersome metal in discharge of debts. The copper cent in that case must be $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as large as is proposed at present, or 350 grains. Why encrease an odium, or over busily adventure on a hazardous innovation in a delicate affair?

Copper coin, from the baseness of its metal, is not proper for a money to be forced on creditors. It is to be considered merely as a convenient substitute in the closing a pay-

ment, for want of silver coin small enough for minute fractional purposes: as such it is voluntarily received. Hucksters choose to receive it, as do others, occasionally, in small sums as is convenient to them. There would be no need of copper coins, were it not that cents and pence would be in too small pieces, for preservation, when in silver; wherefore the base and bulky metal was introduced, merely for small change. If, however it shall be thought proper to give to copper any force, - which it is wished may be never attempted, it ought to be, if possible, without injury or alarm to creditors. Forced payments in copper may in that case be limited to 5 or at most 9 cents on the close of full payments, large or small: on the payment of 10,000 dollars, no more to be forced on the creditor than in a case of the least sum; because there is true and honest money in gold and silver of standard intrinsic value as low as ten or 5 cents, and the coppers are no further useful than for closing the fractional balance. If the necessity of a copper coinage can be avoided, it may be considered how far it would answer to coin cents in pieces of silver, whose periphery is enlarged by forming them into a sort of rings with milled edges or coined surfaces: or rather the composition called billon may be coined, solid as are common copper halfpence: it is more valuable than copper alone, being of copper and silver, yet bulky enough to be easily preserved. A billon-cent of a 50d. dollar, half copper and half silver, which is the exact mint alloy for fine gold would be near as large as a quarter of a Spanish dollar. But copper cents, the size, very nearly of an English halfpenny, with its division into half pieces of 5 mills, are preferable to billon cents, and to small rings worth a cent each, as these would be too slender. The half cent in copper would be about the size of a farthing English.

On the whole of what I can collect concerning copper coins, it seems, they do not pass so much because of their small

intrinsic worth, as by common consent induced by a degree of necessity, merely as they are tokens for fractional sums which cannot be well issued in real money of the precious metals. This inference is countenanced by the considerable deviations in their weights, when issued even by the authority of nations tenacious of their character. English halfpennies of pure copper have been issued from the English mint of the contents of 156, if not 166, down to 146 grains, as they now are and have been upwards of sixty years: and base copper issued by private coiners light as 116 grains, by consent, have passed currently as the best, to a vast amount, and great loss of the community. The quantity of metal appointed by public authority to be contained in copper coins, being a good deal arbitrary, the American States may have their cent coin, of fine copper, that shall nearly have the weight of a British halfpenny: The British halfpenny weighs 146 grains of fine copper.

Two pounds of copper will give 100 cents, each weighing 140 grains. The cents, for a device, may have a man, on one side of them, erect, comfortably clothed, and holding a spade in his hand: read, - Fro. Indust. Cents beco. Reg. - On the reverse, of this base coin - a coin that cannot well be deemed money, instead of the eagle let there be, on the margin of the cent, this reading: - "United States of America"; - and in the middle of the piece read - "Cent". There will be a fair blank between the readings: which may be lightly ornamented or left blank, or crowded in Gothic taste - if it be the taste.

B.

In London (England) newspapers as below:-

The Morning Herald No.1677 Sat. March 11 1786 p.3 centre of col.1:-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, "LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA;" round a central cypher U.S. - On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed "CONSTELLATIO NOVA !" "

The Public Advertiser No.16164 Tues. March 14 1786 p.3 foot of col.2:-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation; one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription "Libertas et Justitia;" round a central cypher U.S. On the reverse is a Sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed "Constellatio nova !" Not the Georgium Sidus. "

The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser No.5250 Tues. March 14 1786 p.3 near top of col.3 :-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, "Libertas et Justitia;" round a central cypher U.S. - On the reverse is a sun rising amidst thirteen stars, circularly inscribed "Constellatio nova." "

The London Chronicle vol.LIX No.4574 Sat.-Tues. March 11-14 1786 page 242 centre of central col.:-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, Libertas et Justitia; round a central cypher U.S. On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed Constellatio nova. "

The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser No.5252 Thurs. March 16 1786 p.3 top right corner

" A correspondent observes, that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers, respecting a copper coinage in America, is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription, "Libertas et Justitia, &c." was not made in America, nor by the direction of Congress. It was coined at Birmingham, by the order of a merchant in New York. Many tons were struck from this dye, and many from another; and they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit half pence are in England. "

Nil further found in period March 1 thru 21 in above 4 newspapers; nor any trace whatever in The General Advertiser in same period, in particular in the extracts that it printed from its despatches from Boston (N.E.) and New York. The London Gazette being an official journal did not carry general news or gossip. The Morning Herald not scanned as British Museum possesses only a few numbers for 1786; same may be true of The Morning Post and The General Evening Post.

In the above extracts, the exact typography is reproduced as faithfully as possible (underlining being used to represent italics) including the incidence of upper-case letters, dashes, etc. In the heading details, 'p.3' 'col.3' etc. should be read as 'third page' 'third column' etc. as these were not numbered in the newspapers except in the case of the London Chronicle (the page nos. of which evidently ran from January 1). All the extracts were paragraphs amidst general news produced unsigned and unreferenced.

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" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, "LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA;" round a central cypher U.S. - On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed "CONSTELLATIO NOVA !" "

The Public Advertiser No.16164 Tues. March 14 1786 p.3 foot of col.2:-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation; one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription "Libertas et Justitia;" round a central cypher U.S. On the reverse is a Sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed "Constellatio nova !" Not the Georgium Sidus. "

The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser No.5250 Tues. March 14 1786 p.3 near top of col.3 :-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, "Libertas et Justitia;" round a central cypher U.S. - On the reverse is a sun rising amidst thirteen stars, circularly inscribed "Constellatio nova." "

The London Chronicle vol.LIX No.4574 Sat.-Tues. March 11-14 1786 page 242 centre of central col.:-

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, Libertas et Justitia; round a central cypher U.S. On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed Constellatio nova. "

The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser No.5252 Thurs. March 16 1786 p.3 top right corner:

" A correspondent observes, that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers, respecting a copper coinage in America, is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription, "Libertas et Justitia, &c." was not made in America, nor by the direction of Congress. It was coined at Birmingham, by the order of a merchant in New York. Many tons were struck from this dye, and many from another; and they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit half pence are in England. "

Nil further found in period March 1 thru 21 in above 4 newspapers; nor any trace whatever in The General Advertiser in same period, in particular in the extracts that it printed from its despatches from Boston (N.E.) and New York. The London Gazette being an official journal did not carry general news or gossip. The Morning Herald not scanned as British Museum possesses only a few numbers for 1786; same may be true of The Morning Post and The General Evening Post.

In the above extracts, the exact typography is reproduced as faithfully as possible (underlining being used to represent italics) including the incidence of upper-case letters, dashes, etc. In the heading details, 'p.3' 'col.3' etc. should be read as 'third page' 'third column' etc. as these were not numbered in the newspapers except in the case of the London Chronicle (the page nos. of which evidently ran from January 1). All the extracts were paragraphs amidst general news produced unsigned and unreferenced.

Owners of silver Nova Constellatio Coins

Mark	Quint (legend)	Quint (No legend)	Cent
Charles Thompson	Charles Thompson		
Samuel E. Thompson	Samuel E. Thompson		
Rathmell Wilson	Rathmell Wilson		Auction in Scotland 1884
<i>cast</i> Mickley sale -1867	Mickley sale -1867		Collector in England
<i>cast</i> Wm. Appleton	Wm. Appleton		American dealer 1885
John W. Haseltine	John W. Haseltine		Woodward's 73rd sale-1885
Henry S. Adams	Henry S. Adams		
S. S. Crosby	S. S. Crosby	S.S. Crosby	
Lorin G. Parmelee	Lorin G. Parmelee		
S.H. & H. Chapman	S.H. & H. Chapman		S.H. & H. Chapman

Johns Hopkins

Johns Hopkins

Johns Hopkins Johns Hopkins

Eric:

Is this worth pursuing? gaps to be filled, no smooth transition to Mickley and from Appleton. Help or suggestions would be appreciated.

*J S Turning Sale #1064 100 mill, edge leaves
4/27/86 sold to Horn & Parmelee for \$272⁰⁰*

& I've intend to bind him over to ye Provincial Court to answer it where I doe aliso expect yo^e to bee to make good ye charge. Hee will bee called uppon his Tryal ye 4th or 5th of Octob^r next at ye court to be held then att Patuxent neare Mr Henricks house where I suppose yo^e will not fayle to bee. Witnesses examined in Virginia will bee of noe vauwe here in this case for they must bee face to face wth ye party accused or they stand for nothing, I thought good to acquaint yo^e wth this that yo^e may not come unprovided. This at present S^r is all from

Yo^r friend Josias Kendall 29 Septemb

Hon^{ble} S^r Yo^r of this 29th instant this day I received. I am sorry yt my extraordinary occasions will nott permit mee to bee att ye next Provincial Court to bee held in Mary Land ye 4th of this next month Because then, good willing I intend to gett my young sonne baptized All ye Company & Gossips being already invited. Besides in this short time witnesses cannott be gott to come over But if Mr Prescott be bownd to answer it ye next Prowinciall Court after this I shall doe what lyeth in my power to get them over. S^r I shall desyre yo^e for to acquaint mee whither Mr Prescott be bound over to ye next Court and when ye Court is that I may haue some time for to provide Evidence & see I rest Yo^r friend & Serv^t 30 Septemb, 1659 John Washington

To w^{ch} complaynt of John Washington the sa Edward Prescott submitting himselfe to his tryall denyeth not but that there was one Elizabeth Richardson hanged on his ship as he was outward Bound ye last yeare from England & coming for this province neare unto ye Western Islands by his Master & Company (Hee hauing appoynted one John Greene for y^e voyage Master though himselfe was both Merch^t & owner of ye ship) But further sayth That he wthstood ye proceedings of his s^d Master & Company & protested agst them in that business And that thereuppon both ye Master & Company were ready to Mutiny.

And it appeering to ye court by ye Printed Custome house discharge & Light house bills or acquittances produced & shewen by ye sd Edw. Prescott taken or gyven in John Greene's name that ye sd Greene was Master for y^e voyage & not Edward Prescott and noe one comming to prosecute, the sd Prescott therefore prays that he may be acquitted:

Whereuppon standing uppon his Justificⁿ Proclamatiⁿ was made O, Yes &c Edward Prescott prisoner at ye bar uppon suspition of felony stand uppon his acquittall. If any person can give evidence against him let him come in, for ye Prisoner otherwise will be acquitted. And noe one appearing the prisoner is acquitted by ye Board.

XII.—NOTES ON THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE MINT.

From Robert Morris's Diary.

1781. July 16th. Wrote to Mr. Dudley at Boston inviting him hither in consequence of the Continental Agent Mr. Bradford's Letter respecting him referred to me by Congress.

July 17th. Wrote Mr. Bradford respecting Mr. Dudley.

Nov. 10th. Ordered some money on application of Mr. Dudley to pay his expenses.

Nov. 12th. Sent for Mr. Dudley to consult him respecting the quantity of Alloy Silver will bear without being discoloured, he says he can put 6 drops into an ounce. Desired him to assay some Spanish Dollars and French Crowns, in order to know the quantity of pure Silver in each.

Nov. 16th. Mr. Dudley assayed a number of Crowns and dollars for our information respecting the Mint.

1782. Jan. 2d. Mr. Benjamin Dudley applied for money to pay his Board which I directed to be paid by Mr. Swanwick, this gentleman is detained at the public expence as a person absolutely necessary in the Mint, which I hope soon to see established. My propositions on that subject are to be submitted to Congress so soon as I can get the proper assays made on Silver coins &c.

Jan. 7th. Mr. Dudley applies about getting his wife from England. I promised him every assistance in my power.*

Jan. 18th. I went to Mr. Gov^r Morris's

* The following, from the Morris Papers, serve to illustrate this subject:

"1.—ROBT. MORRIS TO RICHARD YATES.

"PHILAD'A. Jan. 23^d 1782.

"SIR,

"At the request of a very honest Man who seems much distressed for the welfare of his wife, now in London, I beg to trouble you with the enclosed Letter, praying that you will forward it, and if in consequence thereof M^r Dudley should come to New York, I beg of you to procure Liberty for her to come to her Husband at this place. The money for her Passage and reasonable expence to New York, which must be reasonable as possible she may draw upon her Husband M^r Benjamin Dudley, and I engage that the Draft shall be paid. I shall thank you for your attention to this poor Lady when she arrives, and remain Sir,

"your most obedient and

"humble servant —

"ROBERT MORRIS."

"2.—ROBT. MORRIS TO THE COMMISSARY GENERAL OF PRISONERS

"PHILAD'A. Jan. 23^d 1782.

"SIR,

"I send herewith an open letter for M^r Richard Yates containing one for M^r Dudley in London from her Husband now here. I wish these may be safely delivered to M^r Yates, and therefore pray you to send them into New York, by some person that will not only promise, but perform the delivery of them. I am Sir,

"your most obedient and

"humble servant

"ROBERT MORRIS."

See for other similar Memoranda Mar 1923 p.111

Lodging to examine the plan we had agreed on, and which we had drawn up respecting the Establishment of a Mint, we made some alterations and amendments to my satisfaction and from a belief that this is a necessary and salutary measure. I have ordered it copied to be sent into Congress.

Jan. 26th. Mr. Dudley applied for money to pay his Lodgings &c. I ordered Mr. Swanwick to supply him with fifty dollars, informed him that the Plan of a Mint is before Congress, and when passed, that he shall be directly employed, if not agreed to by Congress, I shall compensate him for his time &c.

Feb. 26th. Mr. Benjamin Dudley brought me the rough drafts or plan for the rooms of a Mint &c. I desired him to go to Mr. Whitehead Humphreys to consult him about Screws, Smith-work &c. that will be wanted for the Mint, and to bring me a list thereof with an estimate of the Cost.

Feb. 28th. Mr. Dudley informs me that a Mr. Wheeler, a Smith in the Country, can make the Screws, Rollers &c. for the Mint. Mr. Dudley proposes the Dutch Church, that which is now unoccupied, as a place suitable for the Mint, I sent him to view it, & he returns satisfied that it will answer, wherefore I must enquire about it.

March 22d. Mr. Dudley and Mr. Wheeler came and brought with them some Models of the Screws and Rollers necessary for the Mint. I found Mr. Wheeler entertained some doubts respecting one of these Machines which Mr. Dudley insists will answer the purposes and says he will be responsible for it. I agreed with Mr. Wheeler that he should perform the work; and, as neither he or I could judge of the value that ought to be paid for it, he is to perform the same agreeable to Mr. Dudley's directions, and when finished, we are to have it valued by some Honest Man, judges of such work, he mentioned Philip Syng, Edwd. Duffield, William Rush and — all of whom I believe are good judges and very honest men, therefore I readily agreed to this proposition. And I desired Mr. Dudley to consult Mr. Rittenhouse and Francis Hopkinson Esquire, as to the Machine or Wheel in dispute, and let me have their opinion.

March 23d. Mr. Dudley called to inform me that Mr. Rittenhouse & Mr. Hopkinson agree to his plan of the Machine &c.

April 12th. Mr. Dudley wants a horse to go up to Mr. Wheelers &c.

May 20th. Mr. Dudley wrote me a Letter this day and wanted money. I directed Mr. Swanwick to supply him, and then desired him to view the Mason's Lodge to see if it would Answer for a Mint, which he thinks it will, I desired him to go up to Mr. Wheelers to see how he goes on with the Rollers &c.

June 17th. Mr. Dudley applied for money to pay his Bill. I directed Mr. Swanwick to supply him.

June 18th. Issued a warrant in favor of B. Dudley £7.11.6.

July 15th. Mr. B. Dudley applied for money, he is very uneasy for want of employment, and the Mint in which he is to be employed and for which I have engaged him, goes on so slowly that I am also uneasy at having this gentleman on pay and no work for him. He offered to go and assist Mr. Byers to establish the Brass Cannon Foundry at Springfield. I advised to make that proposal to Genl. Lincoln and inform me the result to-morrow.*

July 16th. Mr. B. Dudley to whom I gave an order on Mr. Swanwick for fifty dollars, and desired him to seek after Mr. Wheeler to know whether the Rollers &c. are ready for him to go to work on rolling the copper for the Mint.

August 22d. Mr. Saml. Wheeler who made the Rollers for the Mint, applies for money. I had a good deal of conversation with this ingenious gentleman.

August 26th. Mr. Dudley called and pressed very much to be set at work.

Sept. 3d. Mr. B. Dudley applied for a passage for his Friend Mr. Sprague, pr. the Washington to France & for Mrs. Dudley back. Mr. Wheeler applied for money which I promised in a short time.

Sept. 4th. Mr. Wheeler for money. I desired him to leave his claim with Mr. McCall Secretary in this office, and I will enable the discharge of his notes in the Bank when due.

Novr. 8th. Mr. Dudley applies for the amount of his Bill for Lodgings and Diet &c. and I directed Mr. Swanwick to pay him, but am very uneasy that the Mint is not going on.

Dec. 23d. Mr. Dudley and Mr. Wilcox brought

* This letter will illustrate this subject:

ROBERT MORRIS TO THE REV. WILLIAM GORDON, D.D.

[From the Morris Papers.]

"PHILADA. 25th July, 1782.

"SIR,

"In consequence of your Letter of the nineteenth of June, I sent for Mr. Dudley told him the information you had so kindly given to me and assured him of my desire to make him easy and happy. The Business in which he is intended to be employed, is like many other important matters, retarded by the tediousness of the States in supplying the Continental Treasury.

"The Hon^{ble} Secretary at War has commenced a correspondence with General Gates at my request, which I think, will produce what he wishes. Be assured that I take particular pleasure in promoting the Interest and happiness of worthy men, and that I am with great esteem Sir,

"your most obedient
and humble Servant,

"ROBERT MORRIS."

the subsistence paper, and I desired Mr. Dudley to deliver 4000 sheets to Hall and Sellers.*

Decr 26th M^r Hall the Printer brought 100 Sheets of the subsistence notes this day, and desired that more paper might be sent to his Printing Office, accordingly I sent for M^r Dudley and desired him to deliver the same from time to time, until the whole shall amount to 4000 Sheets.

1783. April 2nd I sent for M^r Dudley who delivered me a piece of Silver Coin, being the first that has been struck as an American Coin.

April 16th Sent for M^r Dudley and urged him to produce the Coins to lay before Congress to establish a Mint.

April 17th Sent for Mr. Dudley to urge the preparing of Coins & for Establishing a Mint.

April 22nd M^r Dudley sent in several Pieces of Money as patterns of the intended American Coins.

May 6th Sent for M^r Dudley and desired him to go down to M^r Mark Wilcox's, to see 15,000 Sheet- of paper made fit to print my Notes on.

May 7th This day delivered M^r Dudley the paper Mold for making paper, mark'd United States, and dispatched him to M^r Wilcox's, but was obliged to advance him 20 dollars.

May 27th I sent for M^r Dudley to know if he has completed the paper at M^r Wilcox's paper mill for the Certificates intended for the pay of the Army. He says it is made, but not yet sufficiently dry for the printers use. I desired him to repair down to the Mill and bring it up as soon as possible.

May 28th M^r Whitehead Humphreys to offer his lot and buildings for erecting a Mint.

July 5th M^r Benj^d Dudley gave notice that he has received back from Mess^{rs} Hall and Sellers the Printers, three thousand sheets of the last paper made by M^r Wilcocks. I desired him to

bring it to this office. He also informs of a Minting Press being in New York for sale, and urges me to purchase it for the use of the American Mint.

July 7th M^r Dudley respecting the Minting Press, but I had not time to see him.

August 19th I sent for M^r Benjamin Dudley, and informed him of my doubts about the establishment of a Mint and desired him to think of some employment in private service, in which I am willing to assist him all in my power. I told him to make out an account for the services he had performed for the public, and submit at the Treasury office for inspection and settlement.

August 30th M^r Dudley brought the dies for Coining in the American Mint.

Sept 3rd M^r Dudley applies for money for his expenses which I agree to supply, but urge his going into private business.

Sept. 4th M^r Dudley for money, which is granted. Directed him to make three models for constructing Dry—

Nov. 21st M^r Dudley applies for money. He says he was at half a guinea a week and his expenses borne when he left Boston to come about the Mint, and he thinks the public ought to make that good to him. I desired him to write me and I will state his claims to Congress.

Nov. 26th M^r Dudley for money which was granted.

Dec. 17th M^r Dudley with his account for final settlement. I referred him to M^r Milligan.

1784, Jan^y 5th M^r Dudley applies for a Certificate of the Time which he was detained in the public service. I granted him one accordingly.

Jan. 7th M^r Dudley after the settlement of his account, which I completed by signing a warrant.

* This letter will illustrate this matter :

ROBERT MORRIS TO BENJAMIN DUDLEY.

[From the Morris Papers.]

"OFFICE OF FINANCE, 29 NOV^r. 1782.

"SIR,

"You will herewith receive the Form for making a particular kind of Paper — You are to proceed to the Paper Mill of M^r Mark Wilcox, in Ash Town Chester County, who has the Staff prepared, and there to superintend the making of sun dry reams of Paper upon this Form—in doing of which you are to be particularly careful not to leave it in the power of any person or persons to make any paper upon this Form without your immediate inspection.

"You are to attend the Workmen constantly whilst they are at work, and when you retire from the Mill upon any occasion, you are to take the Form with you. You are to count the Paper as it is made sheet by sheet and when you have finished the whole, you are to bring it to me together with the Form. I am Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"ROBERT MORRIS."

XIII.—THE RECORDS OF THE CITY OF NEW AMSTERDAM.

PREFATORY NOTE,

Our friend, the venerable Clerk of the Common Council of the city of New York, in his letter communiting the action of that body concerning the proposed publication of portions of its ancient records in the successive numbers of *THE HISTORICAL MAGAZINE*, has referred very briefly to the great interest which attaches to those time-stained volumes, and their great importance to both the student and the statesman. They are the earliest existing memorials, in its archives, of the beginnings of the commercial metropolis of America; the earliest internal evidences of Government in that primitive community which laid the foundation of New York's present and future greatness; and, in the lessons which the men of that early period have sent down to us, there is much to be gathered which will make us both wiser men and more useful citizens.

In its earlier days, although New Amsterdam was considered and called a city, it was not different in its character and government from the other settlements of New Netherland. The Commonalty had no voice in its government; there were within it none of the municipal officers or institutions which distinguished the cities of Father-land from its country towns; and the Director general and Council of the infant Colony, was exercised at once Executive, Legislative and Judicial functions.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NUMISMATICS,

AND

Bulletin of American Numismatic and Archæological Societies.

VOL. X.

BOSTON, OCTOBER, 1875.

No. 2.

THE "NOVA CONSTELLATIO."

THE last number of the *Journal* contained a description of the *Fugios*, which were the first coins issued by authority of Congress. The *Nova Constellatio*, of which we are now enabled, by the renewed kindness of Mr. Crosby, to give illustrations, are believed to be struck from dies, some of which at least, were the *first patterns* for a coinage of the United States, and therefore "command an interest exceeding that of any others of this class." Our description of them is compiled from "The Early Coins of America."

The financier, Robert Morris, reported, January 15, 1782, a system of coinage devised by Gouverneur Morris. We quote from Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*.

"It has been observed, that, to have the money unit very small, is advantageous to commerce; but there is no necessity that this money unit be exactly represented in coin; it is sufficient that its value be precisely known. On the present occasion, two copper coins will be proper, the one of eight units, and the other of five. These may be called an Eight and a Five. Two of the former will make a penny, proclamation or Pennsylvania money, and three a penny Georgia money. Of the latter, three will make a penny New York money, and four a penny lawful, or Virginia money. The money unit will be equal to a quarter of a grain of fine silver in coined money. Proceeding thence in a decimal ratio, one hundred would be the lowest silver coin, and might be called a *Cent*. It would contain twenty-five grains of fine silver, to which may be added two grains of copper, and the whole would weigh one pennyweight and three grains. Five of these would make a *Quint*, or five hundred units, weighing five pennyweight and fifteen grains; and ten would make a *Mark*, or one thousand units, weighing eleven pennyweight and six grains."

Here we have the name, value, and weight of these two patterns, [Figures 1 and 2,] which, probably with others, were submitted to Congress for their approval; but for some unknown reason, no immediate action was taken thereupon.

Jefferson, after consultation with Morris, remarks, "He seems to concur with me, in thinking his smallest fractional division too minute for a unit, and, therefore, proposes to transfer that denomination to his largest silver coin, containing 1,000 of the units first proposed, and worth about 4s. 2d. lawful, or $\frac{25}{32}$ of a dollar. The only question then remaining between us is, whether the

Dollar, or this coin, be best for the unit. We both agree that *the ease of adoption with the people*, is the thing to be aimed at."

Mr. Crosby describes these patterns as follows :—

THE "MARK."

Obverse. Device,—An eye, forming the centre of a glory of thirteen points, the points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. Legend,—NOVA CONSTELLATIO * Border,—A wreath of leaves.

Reverse. Device,—A wreath, enclosing the letters U. S. and the figures 1.000. Legend,—LIBERTAS. JUSTITIA. 1783. Border,—A wreath of leaves. Edge,—Ornamented with leaf-work. Size,—21. Weight,—270 grains = eleven pennyweights, six grains. [Figure 1.]

THE "QUINT."

Obverse No. 1. Device,—An eye on a plain field within a glory of thirteen points, the points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. Legend,—NOVA CONSTELLATIO. Size,—16½. Weight,—135 grains = five pennyweights, fifteen grains. [Figure 2.]

Obverse No. 2. Device,—An eye forming the centre of a glory of thirteen points, the points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. In place of a legend this has a plain raised ring. Size,—16. Weight,—110 grains.

Reverse. Device,—A wreath enclosing the letters U. S. and the figures 500. Legend,—LIBERTAS. JUSTITIA. 1783. Borders of both, beaded, and edges ornamented with leaf-work. This reverse is upon both specimens of the Quint.

In a statement of the accounts of the United States, we find among the "Expenditures for Contingencies," between January and July, 1783, the following items referring to the preparations for coining; and there is no reason to doubt that these patterns are the results of those preparations.

	Dollars.	cents.
"February 8. Jacob Eckfield, for Dies for the Mint of North America,	5	18
March 21. Benjamin Dudley employed in preparing a Mint, . . .	75	24
April 17. John Swanwick, for Dies for the Public Mint, . . .	22	41
May 5. A. Dubois, for sinking, casehardening, &c. four Pairs of Dies for the Public Mint, . . .	72	
June 30. Benjamin Dudley employed in preparing a Mint, . . .	77	60"

The dies for the larger piece, or Mark, differed materially from those for the smaller pieces, or Quint, as they were apparently cut by hand, while the latter were made in the more usual method, by the use of punches. The edges of all the coins were finished alike.

But three specimens from these dies are known, all of which are now in the cabinet of Mr. Crosby. The ownership of two of them is traced to the Hon. Charles Thomson, the Secretary of the first Congress, in the following letter received with them from Mr. Henry S. Adams, by whom they were purchased from Mr. Haseltine :

Philadelphia, May 28, 1872.

"John W. Haseltine, Esqr.

"Dear Sir, The history of the two coins which you obtained from me, viz. Nova Constellatio, 1783, U. S. 1000, Nova Constellatio, 1783, U. S. 500, is as follows :

"They were the property of the Hon. Charles Thomson, Secretary of the first Congress. At his death, his property was left by Will to his nephew, John Thomson, of Newark, State of Delaware. These two coins were found in the desk of the said deceased Charles Thomson, and preserved by his nephew during his life; at his death they came into the possession of his son, Samuel E. Thomson of Newark, Delaware, from whom I received them. So you will perceive that their genuineness cannot be questioned; as they were never out of the possession of the Thomson family, until I received them.

"Yours respectfully,

RATHMELL WILSON."

The pedigree of the third we are unable to trace; but it bears upon its reverse evidence of its genuineness, as it is from the same die that impressed the other of the same value—a Quint.

Samuel Curwen, in his diary, under the date of May 15, 1784, gives the following description of what he calls a medal:—

“Mr. Bartlet presented me with a medal, struck in Philadelphia;—in a round compartment stands, ‘U.S. . . . 5 . . . 1783;’—round, ‘*Libertas et Justitia*;’ on the other side, in the centre, an eye surrounded by a glory; the whole encompassed by *thirteen stars*,—with the legend, ‘*Nova Constellatio*.’”

This was evidently another of the patterns referred to by Morris, probably that called a “Five.” If all the dies mentioned were for coin, and if impressions were taken from all, it remains for some fortunate investigator to discover the pieces still wanting to exhibit the designs of the dies as yet unrepresented in the cabinets of our numismatists. It is not improbable, however, that the item to Swanwick was for the dies in the rough, as that to Dubois so particularly specifies the work he performed. If this supposition be correct, and if the piece described by Curwen was the “Five,” as we believe, we have descriptions of seven out of the eight dies mentioned.

Jefferson’s modification of Morris’s system ultimately prevailed, which probably accounts for the scarcity of the patterns of Morris’s proposed coins: owing to the disadvantages under which they were produced, it is probable that very few of these were struck; perhaps, indeed, it is not unlikely, but a single specimen of each, to submit to Congress.

The Nova Constellatio dies were used with the “Immune Columbia.” (Fig. 3 and 4.) These patterns are found in silver and copper. In the United States Mint, is the only known specimen of Figure 4 in gold, struck on a guinea of one of the Georges. The dies of the pieces shown in our engraving are believed to have been made by Thomas Wyon of Birmingham, England.

Nova Constellatio coppers were struck in England for use in America. The series comprises several varieties, specimens of most of which are often found, though some of them are very rare. Little is known of the history of these tokens. The most that can be learned in relation to them is contained in the following extract from Bushnell’s Numismatic Notes in manuscript:—“The Nova Constellatio were made in Birmingham, in England, and the dies were cut by Wyon, of that place. Over forty tons were issued from one die alone, and many more from another. They were manufactured by order of a gentleman of New York, who is believed to have been Gouverneur Morris.” We give Mr. Crosby’s description of those having dates of 1783 and 1785.

1783. Obverse. Device,—An eye on a plain field, within a glory of thirteen points, the points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. Legend,—NOVA CONSTELLATIO *

Reverse. Device,—U S in large Roman capitals, encircled by a wreath. Legend,—LIBERTAS * JUSTITIA · 1783 · Borders,—Usually milled, sometimes serrated. Edges,—Plain. Size,—16½ to 18. Weight,—117 to 138 grains. [Figs. 5 and 6.]

1785. Obverse. Device,—An eye on a plain field, within a glory of thirteen points, the points intersecting a circle of thirteen stars. Legend,—NOVA CONSTELLATIO

Reverse. Device,—U S in script monogram, encircled by a wreath. Legend,—LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA · 1785 · Borders,—Usually milled, but on some serrated. Edges,—Plain. Size,—16½ to 18. Weight,—From 108 to 127 grains. [Figs. 7, 8 and 9.]

One die, which was used in 1783 and 1785, [Fig. 6 and 7.] has the legend spelled NOVA · CONSTELLATIO *

- ● Regarding RF-52 (CNL, April 1973, p. 401). Where were the Nova Constellatio coins coined -- Birmingham or Greenwich ?
- from Eric P. Newman
St. Louis, Missouri

I wrote up this matter in the Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine in January, 1960, p.6, but had not then located the data in the English papers. Enclosed is that data -- it shows that Birmingham was the source. The person who wrote it must have known what he was talking about as he was correcting others.

The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser No. 5252
Thurs. March 16, 1786
page 3, top right corner

" A correspondent observes, that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers, respecting a copper coinage in America, is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription, "Libertas et Justitia, &c." was not made in America, nor by the direction of Congress. It was coined at Birmingham, by the order of a merchant in New York. Many tons were struck from this dye, and many from another; and they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit halfpence are in England. "

The "paragraph" which gave rise to this comment appeared in several London (England) newspapers during the period March 11 - 14, 1786 including The Morning Herald; The Public Advertiser; The London Chronicle as well as The Morning Chronicle, and London Advertiser:

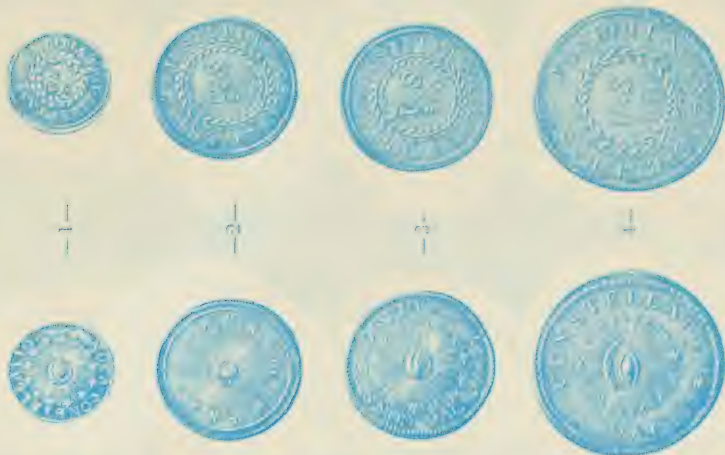
" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, Libertas et Justitia; round a central cypher U.S. On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed Constellatio nova. "

All the extracts were paragraphs amidst general news produced unsigned and unreferenced.





1 2 3 4 5



Specimen c. 1763 to exemplify Robert Morris' proposed coinage for the United States.

1. 100-unit coin, or cent
2. 500-unit coin, or quint (with variant obverse and light weight)
3. 500-unit coin, or quint
4. 1000-unit coin, or mark

For a general description of these coins, see p. 111.



percentage increase of the uncirculated version.

Undoubtedly the counsel to purchase "the finest possible piece" will continue for years to come. However, it appears likely that higher-grade circulated coins

will continue to match the price growth of uncirculated coins and that collectors of moderate means who own high-grade circulated coins will share significantly in the investment benefits which develop in future coin markets.

Albuquerque 1980 Convention BEP Souvenir Card

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING
WASHINGTON, DC



This engraving, printed from a plate made from the original master die, is a replica of the back of the Series 1890 \$5 Silver Certificate. It complements the face printing of this class, denomination, and series which was issued as a souvenir card in 1973.

As in previous issues of this series, portraits were placed on the backs of notes because the face designs were very detailed and extended over the entire obverse of the notes.

The back of the \$5 Silver Certificate bears the portraits of General Ulysses S. Grant and Philip Sheridan, with a central design of much artistic rendering, showing the head of a goddess with outstretched wings and shades of light radiating therefrom. Thomas F. Morris, Chief of the Bureau's Engraving Division at the time, created the design. Lorenzo Hatch engraved the portraits and G. F. C. Simile engraved the head and wings.

AMERICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO—FEBRUARY 15-17, 1980
THE COPIES OF THIS CARD ARE SUBJECT TO THE U. S. G. S. WHICH PROHIBITS THE UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION, IN WHOLE OR IN PART, OF COINAGE, POSTAGE STAMPS, OR OTHER SECURITIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

Reestablishing a tradition which began at the 1969 ANA convention in Philadelphia, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing issued a special souvenir card for the ANA's Second Midyear Convention featuring a reproduction of an engraving of the reverse of the \$5 Silver Certificate, Series 1890.

Completing the Educational Series of cards which were issued for conventions every year from 1971 through 1976, the \$5 Silver Certificate reverse bears the portraits of Generals Ulysses S. Grant and Philip Sheridan with a central design of the head of a goddess with outstretched wings.

Cards are priced at \$3 each and for those who were unable to attend the convention may be ordered by mail from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. The souvenir card will be withdrawn from sale on May 15, 1980, or upon depletion of stock, whichever occurs sooner.

Mail orders must be accompanied by proper remittance in the form of check or money order made payable to the "Bureau of Engraving and Printing," and addressed to: 1980 ANA Souvenir Card, Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington, DC 20228. Customers are requested not to send cash with their orders. Normal processing requires approximately 60 days; however, additional delay may result because of unusual demand and priority program requirements.

Requests should be made on letter-size sheets or the order forms provided with previous deliveries. Orders must contain the purchaser's name, address and zip code. Enclosure of an extra "return address label" with the order will facilitate handling and expedite delivery.

(continued from last month)

Woodward and Garrett

An Historical Study

by Carl W.A. Carlson, N.L.G.
ANA 95735

Most of the pieces were either uncirculated or proof. It is interesting to note that Garrett's purchases of foreign pieces from Woodward had virtually stopped by this time; as we saw in the Newlin correspondence, he was beginning to reduce his holdings in foreign at about this period, much of it being sold through George Massamora's auctions in Baltimore, and was working on completing his American series. Aside from the pieces Garrett bought from Woodward's 77th and 78th Sales, the J.C. Randall Sales of 6/29/85 and 9/15/85 discussed in detail in the 1976 Newlin article, we currently have record of only one further auction purchase from Woodward's sales: an 1801 Half Dollar from his 80th Sale, the Matthews Collection, 12/16/85. We mention this here, out of sequence, since it falls in more naturally at this point than interspersed with the remaining correspondence which is on other matters.

Correspondence resumes in our file on March 2, 1885: "For your order telegraphed me from Florida [must have been for the Wight Sale] I am very much obliged. I



Ten Dollar Gold Pattern, 1863, Judd 349. Ex Mendes Cohen; Dohrmann; Heman Ely; Woodward's 69th, 10/13/84, Lot 1999. Unique.



Ten Dollar Gold Pattern, 1863, Judd 351. Ex Mendes Cohen; Dohrmann; Heman Ely; Woodward's 69th, 10/13/84, Lot 2000. Unique.



Half Eagle, 1829, Small Date. Ex H.P. Newlin, 10/31/84.

believe I got everything you ordered, and I do not think I paid an unreasonable price for any one, though in the prehistoric department [the Pennsylvania Collection of 2/26/85, two days after the Wight Sale] you selected most of the very best things. On second thought, I believe I did miss Nos. 1084 and 1085, these were ordered by a gentleman at \$5 each which I consider the very highest anyone ought to pay for them. 1085 was by some means lost and did not appear at the sale.

"I have lately made a great numismatic discovery, or rather I have turned up in England an unknown American coin of the very highest interest. I shall add it to my sale of April 2-3 [the Clark Sale, his 73rd]. I shall mail a description to Baltimore, and if you will take the trouble to inform me where you will be say about March 10, I will send you a copy direct.

"I sincerely hope you will be pleased with the coins, etc., when you receive them. When I have an order without limit I always feel troubled for fear I may overestimate the goods and buy them at too high a price. I think you will, however, in this case approve of what I have done . . . P.S. I would address this letter to Pulaska but presume you are on the wing, and thus send this to Baltimore . . ." Garrett was off on one of his traveling vacations in the South, as was often the case during part of the winter or early spring when the

weather was raw. More information on the "... unknown American coin . . ." came in with Woodward's letter of March 14, written in another hand and signed "per B.": "I send for your acceptance a copy of my 73rd Catalogue with plate and addenda. In the latter you will not fail to notice not only the gem of the collection, but the gem of any collection in which the piece may in future appear. This piece has been seen by all the leading Numismatists and Dealers in New York and Boston and it is, of course, exciting much interest. I have declined large offers for it, \$300 and \$450, but as so many have seen it I thought it only fair to offer it for public competition. I presume you are now at the South or I should have heard from you concerning my awkward loss of a memorandum of the Japanese Sword Guards which I sent you last. [Garrett had a fine collection of these, many still in the Garrett Oriental Collection.] I await your reply until you return. Your visit to Florida, so far as the climate is concerned, seems to be most enviable. The weather in Boston is fearful enough at the best, but it has this Winter been exceptionally terrible . . ."

The separately printed Addenda to Woodward's 73rd Sale was brief—only seven lots—but began with his "discovery coin," the 1783 Nova Constellatio silver Bit, to which he gave the following treatment:

"UNIQUE AMERICAN COIN"

"In 1782 the financier, Robert Morris, reported a system of coinage devised by Gouverneur Morris, the unit of which was an imaginary piece of small value. The largest coin, the Crown, was to be of gold, valued at 10,000 of the units; the next of silver, the Mark or Dollar of 1,000 units; the next the Quint or Half Dollar of silver of 500 units; and the Bil or Bit of silver of 100 units; and a copper coin of 10 units. Of these coins, until the present piece was discovered in Scotland, but three examples were known to exist, one of the Mark and two of the Quint; the obverses of the last two pieces differ materially, the reverses are from the same die. The gold Crown is unknown, and it is quite likely was never struck, and doubtful if dies were ever prepared

for it, as all the dies which were made for a government coinage at the period—1782-3—with a single exception were accounted for before the discovery of this piece.

"The Mark, and the two Quints mentioned, were formerly in the collection of Mr. S.S. Crosby, to whose work on American Coins, pages 307 and following, reference is made for a full and interesting account of all that is known concerning these incunabulae of American coinage, for it is certain that they comprise the earliest efforts looking to the establishment of a Government coinage.

"The three pieces referred to are now all in the magnificent collection of Mr. Loring G. Parmelee of Boston."

This was followed by the lot description:

"1 1783 The Bit; device, an eye on a plain field within a glory or sun of thirteen points; within the points a circle of thirteen stars; legend, NOVA CONSTELLATIO; rev., a wreath enclosing the letters U.S. and the figures 100 below; legend, LIBERTAS JUSTITIA. 1783; size, 11; weight, 27 grs. nearly. The edge of this piece is ornamented with leaf work similar to the larger denominations. The coin has been carefully compared with the three previously referred to; it is not only of the precise style of workmanship of the others, but the dies are undoubtedly by the same artist. It has existed for an unknown period in the collection of an old numismatist in Scotland, whose recent death led to the dispersion of his cabinet by auction. The condition of the piece is perfect, uncirculated, and as nearly proof as coins of the period are found; it is covered with a dark film, which scarcely obscures its brilliancy; this film may be instantly removed, but it is in itself important evidence of the authenticity and antiquity of the coin. It will be limited at \$550. If that starting bid is made, it will positively be sold, otherwise it will not be offered. See Plate Cat. 73, 1 ad."

Woodward elaborated on the Bit in a notice, or, as we would say today, a Press Release in the April, 1885, issue of the *American Journal of Numismatics*, p. 81:

"Discovery of a New Piece in the Nova Constellatio Series"

"The numismatic event of the period, of interest to the American collector, is the discovery, in Scotland, of the small silver piece of the series suggested by Gouverneur Morris in a system of coinage devised by him, and reported to the Government by the financier Robert Morris. This series was to comprise a gold coin, or crown, three silver coins, the mark, the quint, the bit or bil, and two pieces of copper. The gold coin is unknown, and probably never was struck; the mark, and two varieties of the quint, each of the three considered to be unique, are now known in the cabinet of Mr. Loring G. Parmelee of Boston; the bit has hitherto remained undiscovered until within a few months: at the sale by auction in Scotland of the cabinet of a Scotch collector recently deceased, one turned up as an unknown coin, and was purchased by a dealer for the large sum of 15 Pounds 15 Shillings; at which price, with ten per cent added, it was offered to a prominent collector in England, by whom it was sent to an American dealer [Woodward, of course], for advice as to its rarity, genuineness, value, etc. It was returned with a liberal offer, and now having found its way across the Atlantic for a fourth time, it is offered for sale in New York on the 2d of April.

"In a future number, if the facts are obtainable, we hope to give some more definite information concerning this piece and its hiding place for the last century and upwards; it is understood to have been sold in Glasgow. The coin has been submitted to the leading numismatists and collectors in this country, and no doubt whatever is felt concerning its genuineness. A full account of the mark and quint, and whatever was known of Morris's system of coinage, will be found in Crosby's work on the Early Coins of America, where the subject is very fully treated, and also in the *Journal*, Vol. X, p. 33. The piece itself is illustrated on the plate in the catalogue of Mr. Woodward's Seventy-Third Sale, now just issued, and a full description, with some facts, may be found in the addenda to that sale. W."

As regards the other silver Nova Constellatio pieces of 1783, Crosby is known to have obtained the Mark and the first type of the Quint from the Birch Sale, 12/18/72, at high prices. The origin of the second type of the Quint, the one with no obverse legend, has not been generally known, but it seems from accidentally acquired information (during endless browsing of catalogues) that it first surfaced in 1870 in New York. Mason's Monthly Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine for November, 1870, borrowed and reprinted from Brown's Curiosity Cabinet No. 2 of that year the following little paragraph:

"The above illustration is taken from a silver coin in the possession of a young man in the city of New York, and was handed down by his grandfather as a family relic. A similar coin was described in Dickeson's Numismatic Manual, and was sold in the Mickley sale for \$32; also the 1000 piece for double the size for \$70. The figures represent 500 millesimos Spanish money, and it was the first pattern for a half dollar of Colonial (?) money. This coin is the only one known of this variety, and has never before been described. It is in fine condition, size 15½ American scale, with engrailed edge; but owing to a slight flaw has not a good ring. The one from the Mickley collection was size 17 and had "CONFEDERATIO" with a mint mark on the obverse.—Curiosity Cabinet." One may presume that Crosby somehow located the owner and acquired the piece from him directly, as there is no auction record before the sale of Crosby's own collection.

The Bit failed to reach the \$550 reverse placed on it in Woodward's 73rd Sale and remained in Woodward's possession. It recurs as a theme in the next surviving letter in the file, dated Dec. 2, 1885: "I

mail you today a copy of my 80th Catalogue, and beg you will give it a perusal. Amongst the Dimes and ½ Dimes you will notice a few remarkable pieces. No. 1036 I believe is the finest specimen existing.

"I also venture to call your attention to 2065; and No. 2120 cannot be surpassed. You, of course, know it as one of the rarest of American coins.

"Will you buy my Nova Constellatio, or silver Bit! I will sell it to you for less than I have ever offered it, having always held it at \$550. I have repeatedly been offered \$300 for it. I will now sell it for \$450. A gentleman is very desirous of possessing it, but has taken the trouble to announce that he will never buy it. I have taken equal pains to declare publicly that he never shall have it from me. [Must be Parmelee!] I would, of course, be glad to sell the piece, which I regard today as more valuable than any other American coin.

"I think you have Catalogue No. 73 in which the piece is illustrated."

Garrett apparently expressed interest, for Woodward wrote again on December 24: "Your favor was received during my absence, hence the delay in my replying, which you will kindly excuse. The 'Bit' I forward today by Express.

"On Sat. last I received another coin of scarcely less rarity which I take the liberty to send for your examination. You will recognize it at once as the French Colonial Quarter Crown struck for or by Law of the Mississippi Scheme, so well known as the Miss. Bubble. A full account of this coin written by Prof. Chas. E. Anthon may be found in the American Journal of Numismatics, another by R.W. McLachlan in the same work.

"If you happen to have the catalogue of the Collection of



1783. Nova Constellatio Pattern Mark. Mentioned in Woodward's A.J.N. "Press Release" of April, 1885.

George M. Parsons [Frossard's 47th, Oct., 1885], a little better description may be found therein. Parsons' was offered at limit of \$325. I have never before possessed the coin. I think the number known is limited to either 3 or 4. I know of three and suspect the one sent you is a fourth. I never had the opportunity of purchasing one but once, one of the three referred to which was offered to me for \$450.

"A Canadian collector proposed to buy this one (the one sent) at \$250, but the owner, feeling doubtful about the responsibility of the man, declined to send the piece even on approval, so he sold it to me at a reduced price. I offer it at \$200, and considering its rarity the price must be considered very moderate . . . P.S. Having another very rare piece in my pocket which I know you would like to see, I send it for your examination. I sold one not long ago in silver for \$45, one in copper like this but bearing no comparison to it in quality, still a good one, sold at much lower price. The price of this one is \$40 . . ." Unfortunately, there is no further indication of the identity of the last piece mentioned.

So around Christmas of 1885 the silver Bit from the Nova Constellatio series was "visiting" at the Garrett home! Garrett did not buy it, however, and when it returned to the collection at the time of John Garrett's purchase of the Ellsworth Collection in 1923, John had no idea that it had been



1783. Nova Constellatio Pattern Quint, Type I. Mentioned in Woodward's A.J.N. "Press Release" of April, 1885.



1783. Nova Constellatio Pattern Quint, Type II. Mentioned in Woodward's A.J.N. "Press Release" of April, 1885.



1783. Nova Constellatio Pattern Bit. Mentioned and discussed throughout Woodward's correspondence in 1885.

there nearly 40 years earlier, for he never knew of the existence of these correspondence files of his

"1064 1783 The Bit or Bill, or piece of 100 units. Unique pattern coin of the United States. An eye on a plain field within a glory or sun of thirteen points; between the points thirteen stars forming a circle; legend, "NOVA CONSTELLATIO"; rev., a wreath of olive leaves enclosing the letters U.S. and the figures 100; legend, "LIBERTAS JUSTITIA, 1783." Size 11; weight 27 grains or nearly. The edge of the coin ornamented with leaf-work. This coin was offered for sale in the Addenda to my sale No. 73 and was limited to a starting bid of \$550.00, for want of which it was withdrawn. It is now offered, without limit, for positive sale. I have declined an actual cash offer of \$300.00 from a dealer, and a conditional offer of \$400.00 from a collector. A much fuller account of the piece may be found in the Addenda referred to, a copy of which will be sent free on application. The obverse of the piece is illustrated in my Catalogue No. 73, and the reverse is illustrated in this Catalogue, copies of which, with one or more plates, will be forwarded on receipt of order, for 35 cents."

The "conditional offer" of \$400 must have been from Garrett, and have been dealt with in missing letters of early 1885. The Bit did, indeed, sell in the 83rd Sale, but it realized only \$272, passing into Parmelee's collection with the other three Novas. After being "bought in" by Parmelee they were eventually sold, circa 1904, to Ellsworth, coming thence to Garrett in March, 1923. At that time the Bit cost John Garrett \$1,000, though he sold off his other specimen—plain edge—for \$2,200 which more than covered it.

It is noteworthy that at no point did any further information surface concerning the mysterious "old Scotch collector" who had "recently died," the original Bit coming to light in the subsequent "auction" of his estate, probably "in Glasgow." Even today the standard reference works list only

father with the coin dealers of that earlier period! They were only found in the 1950's, long after his death, underneath numerous inventory lists and business letters from the Garrett interests during the 1880's.

The Bit was again offered at auction in Woodward's 83rd Sale, the Twining Collection, April 27-29, 1886, as Lot 1064 (preceded three lots earlier by the 1607 "John Law" Quarter Crown offered Garrett in the Dec. 24 letter):

an "old Scottish collection" as source for the Bit. Yet this need not mean that Woodward was unable to find out anything further. In fact, there is a fair likelihood that both he and certain others—Randall amongst them—found out rather more than they wanted, and not too long after the 1886 sale in which Parmelee bought the Bit!

By a happy chance, while reading my way through some old British auction catalogues of the 1880's during the Summer of 1977, I encountered the catalogue of a sale held in Birmingham, England, at the end of November, 1886: catalogued and owned by E. Shorthouse, Esq., of that city and auctioned by Ludlow, Roberts & Wheeler, the title page reproduced elsewhere in this article. Though the sale consisted of the Greek, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Scotch and English pieces in Shorthouse's

collection, the auctioneer's interesting 5-page discussion concerning American numismatics, beginning at page 59 of the lengthy catalogue. Though the section immediately concerning us occupies but about one page of the five, the rest seems of sufficient interest to U.S. collectors to be worth inclusion here in full, especially since the catalogue seems to have had an

private devotee over here (though there is a copy in the A.N.S. Library, where it has gone unread, Lo! these many years, by those working on Colonial Americana.)

We are pleased to be able to present here, in the words of the numismatist who sent the Bit to Woodward, the story of its origin, acquisition and disposal:

CATALOGUE

OF A PORTION OF THE VERY VALUABLE COLLECTION OF

GREEK, ROMAN, ANGLO-SAXON, SCOTCH

AND

ENGLISH COINS

Formed by E. SHORTHOUSE, Esq., Member of the London Numismatic Society:—Embracing many RARE COINS and PATTERN PIECES, which have not been offered to PUBLIC COMPETITION FOR SOME YEARS.

To be Sold by Auction, by

MESSRS.

LUDLOW, ROBERTS & WELLER,

AT THEIR HOUSE,

No. 18, NEW STREET, BIRMINGHAM,

(Within Three Minutes' walk of New Street Birmingham Railway Station),

On MONDAY, the 29th of November, 1886, and the Three following days, at One o'clock prompt, each day.

FOR VIEW DAYS, SEE OVER.

WATSON AND BALL, PRINTERS, CASTLE STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

TO AMERICAN COIN COLLECTORS.

STOLEN,

from an English Gentleman's Coin Cabinet, end of April, 1886, a valuable set of "Lord Baltimore" silver money, consisting of the Shilling, Sixpence, and rare Groat, in unusually fine condition.

THE GROAT DESCRIBED.

A fine, circular coin, unclipped and perfect; the reverse excellent, the hair of the portrait on the obverse rather worn, the face not well struck up, with a peculiar depression or sinking in of the cheek.

THE THIEF.

As some months have now been judiciously allowed to pass by quietly, it is judged that the thief will about now have gained courage to offer his stolen coins—probably, it is thought, in America. As the above Groat has not been offered to the public for years in America, its sudden appearance this summer will attract attention.

Any Private Collector, Auctioneer, or Dealer who may have heard of a fine Baltimore Groat being offered this summer (or in future) is asked to obtain access to, and particularly notice the coin, and to take a rubbing off it. A well-known and respectable English dealer, and the owner, will undertake to identify and swear to this groat for years to come, singling it out in a moment from any number. Rubbings have been retained off it.

NOT THE FIRST TIME.

From the adroitness shown by the thief (a worthless U. S. token and another coin being slipped into the space left by the theft, which might otherwise have attracted attention on replacing

the cabinet drawer), the detectives consider that this is **not the first time** this man has purloined coins at gentlemen's houses, and it seems desirable that his family should know that the father is a **common thief at large, dangerous to Society.**

Any person in America or England who gives such information as may bring the theft home shall receive a P.O. order for £5, also a beautiful U.S. 1796 cent., with the cap, in absolutely Mint condition, for his trouble.

Address, Mr. E. Shorthouse, 5, Charlotte Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, England, Member of the London Numismatic Society.

THREE YEARS' AMERICAN COIN COLLECTING IN ENGLAND.

The following experiences, it was thought, might amuse and interest Brother Collectors across the Atlantic. Being in easy circumstances, and lacking the talents of his Brother, whose "John Inglesant" has been so well received in America, travels over the world and various "hobbies" have taken up some twenty years. The last hobby was coin collecting, only commenced in 1881. Five years ago fine coins were to be had at about half present prices, and a tremendous "hoard" was obtained. English, American, Canadian, French, Early German, Manx, &c. The nucleus of the last was Dr. Clay's hoard, sold for a mere song in New York. Coming back—through Mr. Randall—and persistently added to, it now forms (so say the dealers) "The finest collection of Manx (Isle of Man) in the world."

AMERICAN COINS.

As late as 1882 U.S. coins were to be picked up in England very cheaply, now they very seldom occur. Our ignorance of them was, and still is, in most cases, profound. We considered 5s. a fair price for an uncirculated 1796 cent. (not the humorously called "cabinet friction uncirculated" of the U. S.

sales), but absolutely **as from the die**; like a proof. A very fine 1795 cent., with thick lettered edge, a gentleman had put out of his collection amongst his "wasters." "These," he remarked, "I do not value at anything." They went at one shilling apiece. A lovely 1794 dollar stood for two years in the "Bureau de Change" window, Charing Cross Station, London, staring at the British public; the writer could have had it a dozen times at £1. Finally swept off by good Mr. Randall on his last visit to the British Isles. **Four or five fine 1796 half-cents.** were also waiting in Birmingham for the latter. We considered them worth about half-a-crown; indeed, a fine one came in from Derby while Mr. Randall was in Birmingham at the modest price of one shilling!

A DISCOVERY.

Discovery of the Unique Pattern small Silver "Bit," or "Bill" (1783), of 100 units. Obv., U. S., in wreath, "Libertas, Justitia," rev., "Nova Constelatia," eye, rays, and stars (size of English sixpence).

During his three years' hunt the writer acquired the above "welcome little stranger." Knowing about as much about it as the average Christian knows about the **Origin of Evil**, he forwarded it to his friend Mr. W. Elliot Woodward, of America, one of those dealers (unfortunately "few and far between") with whom an English gentleman can deal with **safety and pleasure**. He at once candidly stated that it was "gem!" Although its existence had for years been suspected (ever since Mr. Mickley's sale in 1867), only the dollar and half-dollar had been discovered. Both these are in the grand collection of L. G. Parmelee, Esq., Boston, where the writer trusts his little "Bit" has also found a home.

HOW 2s. 3d. (55 CENTS.) BECAME £54 (\$272).

Placed in Mr. W.'s 73rd sale (April, 1885) at the well-meaning, judicious reserve of \$550 (£110), it finally went off in the 83rd sale, April 27th, 1886 (Lot 1,664), for \$272 (£54).

The fact was, it was obtained (with some other small U. S. coins) for 2s. 3d. (55 cents.) from the shop window of T. F. Cloud, Pawnbroker, 207, High Holborn, London. This incident is mentioned as an encouragement to young beginners in numismatics. It is something for a mere novice to add an hitherto unknown example to the coin series of a great Empire.

"PLUMS."

Amongst the hundreds of U. S. coins he has now got together in very beautiful condition only a few "plums" can be mentioned. An "Ameri" cent., in mint condition; another, fine; a 1795 cent., thick lettered edge, in absolutely uncirculated state (an extremely rare coin in such a state); a 1796, with cap, in equal condition, resembles a proof; six fine 1793 cents., with four distinct types of leaves under bust; 23 cents of 1794, all different types, some in mint state; two fine 1804 cents., the last cost 4½d. (9 cents.); a 1799 cent. in mint state was just missed at 7s. 6d., which seemed fairly moderate; 1793-4-5 and 1796 half-cents, nearly mint; Rosa Americana sets (mint); New England shilling; Annanapolis ditto, very fine; 1796 and 1797 dimes, as from the die; a brilliant proof of the 1796 quarter-dollar; Baltimore money (not yet stolen); rows of "pine" and "oak tree" money, some very fine; 1795, &c., silver dollars, in brilliant mint; Bank of Montreal 1838 and '39 (side view of house), in perfect mint state; and an extreme rarity, the "Pitt, No Stamps," cent., in the small half-cent. size, almost mint; one other of these only has occurred in England since he began collecting, namely, a poor one in Frentzel's sale, December, 1881, at Sotheby's, Strand.

IN CONCLUSION.

American coins, compared with those of other nations, appear to the writer to be unquestionably the most uninteresting series in the world. No portraits of past Presidents—no historical memories awakened—nothing but rows of coins almost exactly alike, save an interminable row of different dates.

The (no doubt) well-meaning, but everlasting, eagle (manipulating a claw full of spears with indifferent success), and the equally interminable Female Portrait (whom no one seems to know, but who, like Queen Victoria, retains her youthful features on the coins, as the ages roll by, in a wondrous manner), are certainly discouraging to a collector. Feeling, therefore, no interest in them, save the financial one, it is suggested that some American gentleman, wishing to acquire a very fine U. S. collection, had better come over next summer (1887)—visit the proposed U. S. Exhibition in London—and take away the collection to that Great and Amazing Country (which the writer visited with such pleasure in 1876), to which it properly belongs, and where it will doubtless be properly appreciated.

WATSON AND BALL, PRINTERS, BIRMINGHAM.

"So the infamous "old Scotch collector" was as much a myth as the "auction" of his collection "in Glasgow"! A pawnshop window in East London! Not only that: Woodward would scarcely have invented such a tale himself; others, much more plausible, were available. Nor would he have taken a tale he knew to be false to the pages of the A.J.N. No, Woodward must have been fed this story by Shorthouse himself, believed it and used it in his article and his catalogues. As Randall was apparently well known to Shorthouse, he, at least, must have seen this auction catalogue from Birmingham in late 1886; Woodward probably also saw it as his overseas connections were substantial. It would not have been to the benefit of either of them—they worked closely together for years—to release the true story once they learned it. Nor would it have been to Parmelee's advantage.

Someone, however, *did* "spill the

beans" (a fitting phrase considering Parmelee's fortune came from baked beans!) in 1887, and we cannot claim obscurity of the publication as a reason for having missed this one all these years: the American Journal of Numismatics, Vol. 20, April, 1887, pp. 81-2, had a practically complete and almost verbatim account of Shorthouse's "digression" in that 1886 Birmingham catalogue! The entire business about finding the Bit in Cloud's pawnshop is included. The information, therefore, would have been well known at the time of the Parmelee Sale in 1890, and thus not included in that catalogue. Over the years, the information was gradually lost, since the next public auction of the Bit did not take place until December, 1979, in the Garrett Sale, when the coin passed to John J. Ford, Jr.

Periphrastic evidence that Woodward and Shorthouse had some differences of opinion about matters once this story broke comes from a later event: In

December, 1889, while Woodward was still quite active in cataloguing sales, Shorthouse decided to sell his American coin holdings at auction. He did not, however, bring them to his old acquaintance, Woodward. Instead, his collection appeared as a Chapman Sale on December 6, 1889!

Nearly a year elapsed between the last letter we examined, Dec. 24, 1885, and the final letter in the Woodward file, dated Dec. 20, 1886, though there must have been a fair correspondence during the intervening months. The last letter, not in Woodward's own handwriting, seems to be continuing a subject begun before:

"I received the medals from California, bought so long ago from my friend Dohrmann, who I am

pained to say has recently died. I had never seen Mr. Dohrmann, but had come to cherish a warm friendship for him through a pleasant correspondence of many years.

"These medals, or casts of medals, were got up by order of the old French adventurer Daniel E. Groux. Groux was always distinguished for his humbuggery and dishonesty. He managed to get acquainted with and take advantage of a number of great and excellent men. Among them were Daniel Webster, Chas. Francis Adams, Edward Everett, and Dr. Winslow Lewis, the last one of the most lovely men I ever knew, I think the most charming character with the possible exception of Jas. Carson Brevoort of Brooklyn, N.Y.

"The three medals which I think

CATALOGUE

VERY FINE COLLECTION

COINS OF THE UNITED STATES

BEGINNING WITH THE EARLIEST COLONIAL COINS AND CONTINUING TO THE PRESENT TIME.

ALSO SOME
FINE FOREIGN SILVER AND A FEW RARE CANADIAN COINS.

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AND TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION BY
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786 BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY.

ON
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH,

1889.

COMMENCING AT TWO O'CLOCK, P.M.

particularly you want I am glad to say are here. They are in the parcel marked 1. The presidential, naval and military medals, usually called the national medals, I have put together in another parcel containing 47 pieces, marked 2. The Lee medal, perhaps as rare as any, is in the paper marked 3. The large Washington medal, if original, in paper No. 4, is worth from \$20 to \$50. Package No. 5 contains in all 20 pieces, 3 extremely scarce politicals, casts, facsimiles, etc.

"All these I send in a single bundle. If you want them, you are at liberty to take lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 52 pieces, for say \$25. I am not quite sure but I think the sets of national medals cost originally \$75. If you take the 5 parcels, 72 in number, I will charge you \$28. The entire lot received from Mr. Dohrmann numbers, in addition to those before enumerated, 429 pieces, for which I allowed him \$50 and the freight from California, say \$55, for which sum I would be glad to sell you the entire lot. If you would like them I will ship them to you immediately. The remainder of the medals are mostly French, some English and other nationalities, the quality and style like those sent herewith. The variety is great, containing scarcely any duplicates.

"Passing now to the subject of Archaeology, I mailed you Saturday another catalogue of my 92d Sale. Referring you to the catalogue itself I beg to call your attention to the following numbers; many that I do not mention are equally noticeable and desirable. I may say that to get together such a number of rarities would require the ransacking of all American collections. I send you a catalogue with the numbers marked thus +. Those marked with 2 or more crosses I deem especially worthy of notice. [A list

of lot numbers follows without comment.]

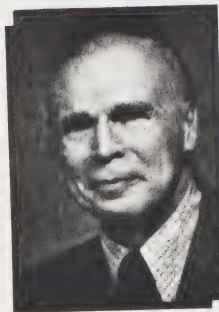
"Should you choose to favor my sale with an order, I will endeavor to obtain all that you may require and to obtain them at the lowest possible prices . . ."

We noted earlier that Garrett was turning his attention more toward archaeological and medallic items than coins as time passed. Medals seem to have become his sole field of numismatics at some point after the Maris Collection Sale in the Summer of 1886 (for which see the Newlin article). Correspondence probably continued with Woodward longer than with any other coin dealer: of the meager 14 auction catalogues in the Garrett Library dated after the Maris Sale (none at all for nearly nine months thereafter) seven are from Woodward, including Woodward's own last extensive series of sales, the 95th through 102nd between May and October of 1888, some dated after Garrett's death in the latter year. Woodward himself was to issue only six more catalogues after that time, ending with his 108th Sale in April, 1890, after which failing health apparently led him to reduce his activities.

William Elliot Woodward, through whose agency the Garrett Collection had been increased by so many superb rarities, died of pneumonia on January 5, 1892, at the age of 66. A fine and heartfelt obituary appeared in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, January, 1892, pp. 70-71, written by "M", probably his old friend William Marvin, the Masonic specialist, printer of the A.J.N., and father-in-law of Howland Wood. Yet perhaps the best epitaph he received came in the pages of the fledgling publication of that day, *The Numismatist*, volume 4, page 25, from Heath's own pen: "A Prince of the House of Numisma has fallen."

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

George D. Hatie



The results of the questionnaire relating to the numbered-seat, staggered-term election procedure were tabulated as of January 31, 1980. In view of the lead time required for the submission of material to *The Numismatist*, it is quite likely that many of you are already aware of the outcome of the tabulation. A total of 8,852 questionnaires were completed by the members with the following results:

QUESTION 1

In favor of numbered seats - 4,528
In favor of election-at-large - 4,131
Voted for both - 6
Did not vote on Question 1 - 187.

QUESTION 2

In favor of staggered four-year terms - 6,083
In favor of nonstaggered, two-year terms - 2,573
Voted for both - 3
Did not vote on Question 2 - 193.

As you know, the numbered seat, staggered-term procedures were adopted by a five-to-four and later rescinded by a five-to-four vote of the members of the board of governors. I proposed a questionnaire because I believe a majority of the members of the association should make decision on questions involving their voting rights, rather than to have their rights determined by the vote of one board member. By the time you read this I shall have requested the board at the Albuquerque meeting to reinstate the numbered seat, four-year staggered term procedures and shall vote in favor of the reinstatement.

As early as 1948, Abe Kosoff suggested a majority election of ANA governors. Subsequent proposals for regional representation on the ANA board have been considered and rejected. Several members, in submitting their questionnaires, indicated a preference for regional representation. If a majority of the board is inclined to consider the question of regional representation, a definite plan must be presented to the board. In my opinion, the board should not substitute a regional plan for the numbered seat system without first submitting an additional questionnaire to the members.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the pros and cons of regional representation, but I intend to express my views on this subject in a future issue of *The Numismatist*.

I shall have also submitted to the board at the Albuquerque meeting a revised bylaw provision for the advanced publication in *The Numismatist* of any bylaw amendment that would affect the voting rights of the members of the association or the structure of the board of governors. This provision will replace the former objection about the bylaw notice provision that was rescinded in St. Louis.

George

Nova Constellatio Copper Coinage

In 1783 Gouverneur Morris, assistant superintendent of finance with the Continental Congress, 1781-1785, ordered a large quantity of coins as a private venture. These bore the Nova Constellatio design, somewhat related in appearance to the Nova Constellatio silver patterns (see Lots 619-622 of this sale). Morris (1752-1816) was born in Morrisania, New York, the family estate. He was admitted to the bar in 1771 after graduating from King's College with a degree in law in 1768. He was an early supporter of the cause for independence. In July 1776 he was a participant at the New York state constitutional convention and, with John Jay and Robert Livingston, helped to draft the 1777 frame of government which endured for nearly a half century.

He attended the Continental Congress as a New York delegate between 1778 and 1779. Military, diplomatic and financial matters interested him, and Morris chaired several committees. In 1778 he visited George Washington at Valley Forge to inspect the troops billeted there for the winter. He was defeated for re-election to the Continental Congress in 1779. He became a citizen of Philadelphia where he engaged in the practice of law and participated in society. His February-April 1780 articles on the subject of Continental finance, which appeared in the Pennsylvania Packet, attracted the

interest of Robert Morris (no relation), the superintendent of finance, prompting him to enlist Gouverneur Morris as his assistant. Serving from 1781 to 1785, he conceived the decimal system of coinage.

It is believed that the Nova Constellatio copper coins, of halfpenny size, were distributed as private speculation by Morris and were made to his order by Thomas Wyon at a private mint in Birmingham, England.

The obverse of each piece bears the inscription LIBERTAS JUSTITIA and a wreath surrounding US. The reverse depicts an all-seeing eye at the center, surrounded by rays and stars and the legend NOVA CONSTELLATIO. This is a reference to the "new constellation," meaning the colonies which together form the United States.

Specimens were made in large quantities with the 1783 and 1785 dates. Numerous die variations occur and were described by Sylvester S. Crosby in his monumental Early Coins of America. A few specimens dated 1786 are known, but these are contemporary imitations from dies other than those engraved by Wyon.

The Nova Constellatio coppers were well received and saw extensive use in commerce, as the number of well-worn specimens extant today attests.

- 608 1783 Crosby 1-A. Pointed rays. Large US. 116.6 grains. Very Fine-20. Scarce die variety.

Uncirculated 1783 Nova Constellatio Copper



(See Color Photo)

- 609 1783 C-2-B. Pointed rays. Small US. 123.3 grains. **Uncirculated, MS-60.** Sharply struck and well defined in all areas. Glossy, lustrous brown surfaces. A truly superb specimen of this issue. Especially rare in this high condition.

From the Mills Collection.

Uncirculated 1783 "CONSTELATIO" Copper



(See Color Photo)

- 610 1783 C-3-C. Blunt rays. Small US. Legend misspelled: CONSTELATIO. 153.3 grains. **Uncirculated, MS-60.** Deep brown glossy surfaces. Exceedingly rare in this elegant state of preservation.

From the collection of Henry C. Miller.

- 611 1785 C-1-B. Blunt rays. CONSTELATIO from the same die as used previously. 126.4 grains. Choice Very Fine-30.

Uncirculated 1785 Nova Constellatio Copper



(See Color Photo)

- 612 1785 C-3-B. Pointed rays. 108.2 grains. **Uncirculated, MS-60.** Lightly struck at the center obverse as is characteristic for this variety. Die break above date, also characteristic of this variety. Dusky, light reddish brown surface. Rare in this condition.

From the collection of Col. James W. Ellsworth.



- 613 1785 C-5-E. Pointed rays. 131.9 grains. **AU-50.** Uneven but not porous. Reddish brown surfaces. Quite an attractive specimen of this elusive variety.

From the Col. James W. Ellsworth Collection.



- 614 1785 C-4-C. Pointed rays. 118.4 grains. EF-40. Scarce die variety.



- 615 1785 C-4-D. Pointed rays. 132.8 grains. EF-40, with dark brown surfaces. This variety has been given the highest degree of rarity by Crosby. Elusive in *all* grades.



- 616 1785 C-2-A. Pointed rays. 125 grains. Slightly different style than the preceding, with the devices appearing smaller in relation to the inscriptions. Choice VF-30. Scarce.

From the Ellsworth Collection; earlier from the Henry C. Miller Collection.

**Possibly Finest Known
1786 Nova Constellatio Copper**



(See Color Photo)

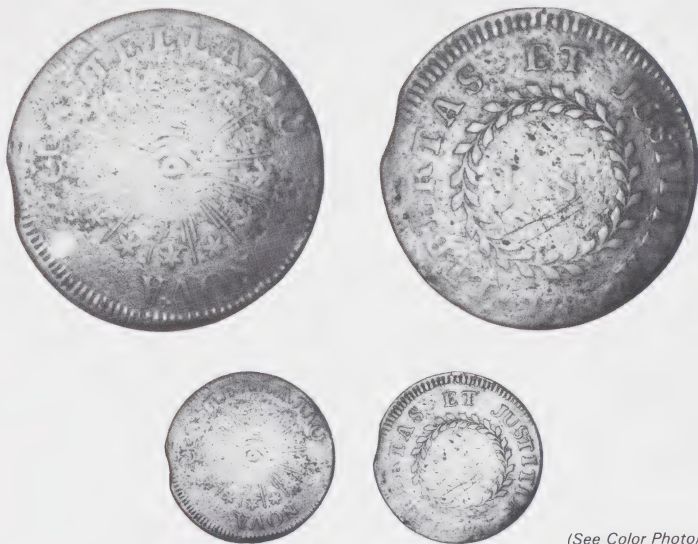
- 617 1786 C-1-A. Pointed rays. Small US. 115.3 grains. Fine-12, or slightly better. Lightly struck, as always. The date is sharp and bold as are all the devices. Planchet with numerous striae. By far the finest specimen seen by us. It is difficult to compare issues of this variety, for some are weakly struck in different areas, while others have large planchet defects and still others have a combination of weak strike and planchet defects. The present coin, from the viewpoint of overall appearance and quality, is the finest we have seen.

The 1786 Nova Constellatio has always been one of the most important rarities among American copper coins of this era. Crosby cited: "but two impressions from the dies of 1786 have come to our knowledge; one of these is owned by Mr. Appleton, the other by Mr. Bushnell."

Students consider the 1786 Nova Constellatio piece to be a contemporary imitation. In the same manner as Machin's Mills imitated coins of Connecticut, Britain and other issues without authorization, some unknown private coiner of the era saw an opportunity for profit and imitated the 1783 Nova Constellatio coinage. Although the design of the 1786 was copied skillfully from the original, the coiner must have been aware of the existence of other dates, such as 1785, and assumed, the absence of information to the contrary, that the series was a continuing one. This gives rise to the speculation that the date 1786 may indicate actual time of coining, or at least the time of die preparation. No original (Morris-distributed) Nova Constellatio pieces of this date are known to exist and it is probable that no examples were struck.

A major opportunity for the Nova Constellatio specialist.

**Duplicate
Rare 1786 Nova Constellatio Copper**



(See Color Photo)

618 **1786 C-1-A.** Pointed rays. Small US. 114.7 grains. A duplicate of the preceding. Good-4, from the standpoint of appearance; undoubtedly Fine or better from the standpoint of actual wear, for this issue was characteristically lightly struck.

The 1786 issue, of which only two were known to Crosby (as noted above), is one of the major rarities among early

American copper coins. Only rarely does *one* specimen appear in a sale. Indeed, many major cabinets lack even a single example. The appearance of *two* together in the same auction is unprecedented, as far as we know.

From Wayte Raymond; earlier from the collection of Waldo C. Newcomer.

Established 1878

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SALE BY AUCTION

February 12, 1925.

Mr. John W. Garrett.

My dear Mr. Garrett:

Your letter of February 11th. received. The history of the ownership of the United States Patterns of 1783, Mark and Quint, in silver, is as follows:

These pieces were found in the desk of Charles Thompson Secretary of the Continental Congress, and brought and sold by his nephew who found them, to John W. Haseltine in 1872. Mr. Haseltine sold them to Henry S. Adams of Boston, who sold them to Lorin G. Parmelee. They were sold in the sale of his collection in 1890 to H. B. Smith, or were bought in for Parmelee's account and were then sold to S.H. & H. Chapman, who sold them to George H. Earle, Jr. of Philadelphia, for whom they were sold by Henry Chapman, to James W. Ellsworth. They were subsequently sold to you, John W. Garrett.

Yours sincerely,

Samuel Hudson Chapman

On February 12, 1925, S. H. Chapman advised John Work Garrett of the history and pedigree of the unique 1783 Nova Constellatio silver pattern coins.

Nova Constellatio Patterns for United States Coinage

An Individual Offering of the Exceedingly Rare and Important 1783 Silver Nova Constellatio Patterns

Four of the rarest, most historically important and most desirable issues in the Garrett Collection are the 1783 Nova Constellatio silver patterns. The importance of these coins is unsurpassed in the field of American numismatics.

A Brief History of the Nova Constellatio Patterns

In 1783 a remarkable group of pattern coins was created. They are patterns for the "bit" of 100 units, the "quint" of 500 units, and the "mark" of 1,000 units. Sylvester S. Crosby identified them as "undoubtedly the first patterns for coinage of the United States . . ."

As assistant financier of the Confederation, Gouverneur Morris proposed a decimal system of coinage and these patterns were the result. In his book *The Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Jared Sparks gives Morris' own account of the situation:

The various coins which have circulated in America have undergone different changes in their value so that there is hardly any which can be considered of the general standard, unless it be Spanish dollars. These pass in Georgia at five shillings, in North Carolina and New York at eight shillings, in Virginia and the four eastern states at six shillings, and in all other states, excepting South Carolina, at seven shillings and sixpence, and in South Carolina at thirty-two shillings and sixpence. The money unit of a new coin to agree, without a fraction, with all these different values of a dollar, excepting the last, will be the fourteen hundred and fortieth part of a dollar, equal to the sixteenth hundredth part of a crown. Of these units, twenty-four will be a penny of Georgia, fifteen will be a penny of North Carolina or New York, twenty will be a penny of Virginia and the four eastern states, sixteen will be a penny of all the other states, excepting South Carolina, and forty-eight will be thirteen pence of South Carolina.

It has already been observed that to have the money unit very small is advantageous to commerce; but there is no necessity that this money unit be exactly represented in coin; it is sufficient that its value be precisely known. On the present occasion, two copper coins will be proper, the one of eight units, and the other of five. These may be called an Eight and a Five. Two of the former will make a penny, proclamation of Pennsylvania money, and three a penny Georgia money. Of the latter, three will make a penny New York money and four a penny lawful, or Virginia money. The money unit will be equal to a quarter of a grain of fine silver in coined money. Proceeding thence in a decimal ratio, one hundred would be the lowest silver coin, and might be called a *Cent*. It would contain twenty-five grains of fine silver, to which may be added two grains of copper, and the whole would weigh one pennyweight

and three grains. Five of these would make a *Quint*, or five hundred units, weighing five pennyweight and fifteen grains; and ten would make a *Mark*, or one thousand units weighing eleven pennyweight and six grains.

An unrelated Morris, by the name of Robert R. Morris, the financier (to whom Morris was assistant at the time he proposed the coinage), left a record of some of the circumstances surrounding the issue of the 1783 patterns. An excerpt from his diary dated April 2nd relates: "I sent for Mr. Dudley who delivered me a piece of silver coin, being the first that has been struck as an American coin."

Following the diary further, on April 16th another meeting occurred as he had again "sent for Mr. Dudley and urged him to produce the coin to lay before the Congress to establish a mint." On the following day, the 17th, he "sent for Mr. Dudley to urge the preparing of coins, etc. for establishing a mint." Finally on April 22nd, Morris reports that "Mr. Dudley sent in several pieces of money as patterns of the intended American coins." Subsequently Morris learned from Dudley "of a minting press being in New York for sale and urges me to purchase for the use of the American Mint." The matter was still unresolved and continuing on August 19th, Morris reports:

I sent for Mr. Benjamin Dudley, informed him of my doubts about the establishment of a mint and desired him to think of some employment in private service, in which I am willing to assist him in all my power. I told him to make out an account for the services he had performed for the public and submit at the Treasury office for inspection and settlement.

The entry on August 30th reports that, "Mr. Dudley bought the dies for coining in the American Mint."

The dies for the bit and quint were cut by hand. The largest denomination, the mark, was made by prepared punches. John W. Haseltine obtained the mark and the quint in 1872. Years later these two pieces were to be sold into the Garrett Collection. At the time Haseltine purchased the pieces the pedigree for them was clearly established by the seller, Rathmell Wilson, who on May 28, 1872 made this statement:

The history of the two coins which you obtained from me, viz. Nova Constellatio 1783, U.S. 1,000, Nova Constellatio 1783 U.S. 500 is as follows.

They were the property of Hon. Charles Thomson, secretary of the first Congress. At his death the property was left by his will to his nephew, John Thomson, of Newark, state of Delaware. These two coins were found in the desk of the said deceased Charles Thomson, and preserved by his nephew during his life; at his death they came into the possession of his son Samuel F. Thomson of Newark, Delaware, from whom I received them. So you will perceive that their genuineness cannot be questioned, as they were never out of the possession of the Thomson family, until I received them.

(continued—)

Charles Thomson was born in County Derry, Ireland in 1729. He came to America in his youth where he became a teacher and merchant in Philadelphia. Interested in politics, Thomson espoused the feeling for independence and was described as "the life of the cause of liberty" in Philadelphia.

From 1774 to 1789 he served as secretary of the Continental Congress, recording with enthusiasm the details of the birth of the United States. His hope of receiving an appointed office in the new federal government was not realized, so he retired to his estate where he engaged in biblical scholarship. He died near Philadelphia in 1824.

Among the accounts of the United States, under the category of "Expenditure for Contingencies" between January and July 1783, the following entries appear in relation to the proposed new coinage:

February 8. Jacob Eckfeldt, for dies for the Mint of North America, \$5 and 18/90ths.

March 21. Benjamin Dudley employed in preparing a mint, \$75 and 24/90ths.

April 17. John Swanwick, for dies for the public mint, \$22 and 42/90ths.

May 5. A. Dubois for sinking, casehardening, etc., for pairs of dies for the public mint, \$72.

June 30. Benjamin Dudley employed in preparing a mint, \$77 and 60/90ths.

Just one specimen is known of the 1783 mark. This pedigree traces its origin to Hon. Charles Thomson. The obverse displays an all-seeing eye surrounded by rays and stars, with the legend NOVA CONSTELLATIO around. The reverse bears the legend LIBERTAS JUSTITIA 1783, a wreath and U.S. 1,000 within the wreath.

There are but two specimens known of the quint. The styles of the two differ slightly from each other. The obverse of one is similar to the mark, but of reduced size. It shows the legend NOVA CON-

STELLATIO surrounding an all-seeing eye with rays and stars. The second variety has the all-seeing eye with rays and stars, but lacks the NOVA CONSTELLATIO legend. The reverse of both is similar to the mark but with the different denomination of 500.

There are only two examples known of the bit. Both of these have the same obverse and reverse designed similarly to the mark but with the appropriate denomination and size; however, they have different edges. The Garrett Collection specimen has an olive leaf design ornamenting the edge. The specimen in the Eric P. Newman Collection has a plain edge.

The Garrett Collection Specimens

The Garrett Collection contains four different examples of the 1783 Nova Constellatio silver pattern issues. Each of them is believed to be unique. The coins are offered individually in the following lots.

These pieces, representing the first official American government coinage for which the official record survives today, are unequalled in their numismatic and historical importance. Needless to say, the Smithsonian Institution, the American Numismatic Society, and all other collections, whether public or private, specifically lack examples of these coins.

Various examples of these issues have been illustrated and discussed in numismatic references including *The Guide Book of United States Coins*, which devotes nearly an entire page to these pieces (page 32 of the 1980 edition); in Scott's *Catalogue and Encyclopedia of United States Coins*, by Don Taxay (page 202 of the 1976 edition); and in the 1914 American Numismatic Society Exhibition catalogue. Walter Breen's *Encyclopedia of United States and Colonial Proof Coins, 1722-1977*, devotes extensive space to these issues (pages 6 and 7) and observes that they were struck as Proofs.

Unique 1783 Silver Nova Constellatio Bit



(See Color Photo)

Enlarged view of edge.

619 **1783 Bit. 100 units.** Edge with twin olive leaf device. Silver pattern. 27.7 grains. **Choice Uncirculated, MS-65, prooflike.** Quite possibly this piece was struck as a Proof (cf. Walter Breen). In any way, the condition is moot for this is the only known example with this edge device.

Another example of the 100 units, or bit, exists in the collection of Eric P. Newman. Earlier this piece was owned by John Work Garrett who obtained it as part of the Col. James W. Ellsworth Collection; he considered it a *duplicate*, therefore it was sold by Wayte Raymond to the Gutttag Brothers, coin dealers located at 52 Wall Street, New York City, and later at 16-18 Exchange Place, in New York. In their circular of May 2, 1923, the Gutttag Brothers described the piece for sale:

THE MOST INTERESTING COIN OF THE ENTIRE
UNITED STATES SERIES.

THE CENT.

Obverse with an eye forming the center of a glory of 13 points, the points intersecting a circle of 13 stars. Legend with NOVA CONSTELLATIO. Beaded border. Reverse with a wreath enclosing the letters "U.S." and the figures "100." Legend with LIBERTAS JUSTITIA 1783, beaded border. Silver, the size of a dime.

There are many coins which dealers call extremely rare and very rare, but the coin we describe herein is practically unique as it is the only one obtainable at any price. It is far more desirable than the Brasher doubloon or the 1822 Half Eagle. We consider it the gem of the entire United States series as it is the foundation upon which the present decimal coinage was raised.

A postage stamp sold recently for about \$35,000 in comparison to which, from every viewpoint, this coin should be worth \$100,000. Of course, we do not expect to obtain a price anything like the price of the stamp referred to, but we feel sure that at some future date this piece will bring more than the rarest postage stamp.

Please do not take my word for this—ask any numismatist. Not more than one dealer ever owned this

rare United States coin or sold it at auction.

We are going to give everyone in the United States the same chance to buy this rarity, and therefore, we will not sell it until May 23, three weeks from above date. If you are interested we should be pleased to hear from you before that date, thus giving everyone interested a chance to communicate with us and get our price.

The first coin minted for the government of the United States; the first coin to bear the letters "U.S."

There is no record of the ultimate sale price of the Ellsworth-Garrett-Gutttag-Newman coin. The previous Gutttag description is reprinted to establish the esteem and importance attributed to this issue in the early 1920s.

Edgar H. Adams' manuscript notes, presently in the American Numismatic Society, indicate that a specimen of the cent . . .

. . . was in a Scottish collection, and about 1885 was sold at an auction in Scotland for 15 pounds, 15 shillings. With ten percent added to the price it was offered to an English collector who sent it to America, from whence it was returned with a liberal offer. On April 2, 1885, it was offered at the 73rd sale of W. Elliot Woodward, held in New York City (*American Journal of Numismatics*, 1885, page 81). A list of prices for the sale was published in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, of October 1885, page 44, but the piece is not mentioned.

The tracing of authentic 1783 Nova Constellatio silver patterns is complicated by the appearance of forgeries from time to time. For example, the Mickley Collection, sold in 1867, contained an example of the 500 units and the 1,000 units in "soft metal," which were early counterfeits. Continuing research by Carl W. A. Carlson (who has done extensive study of the pedigrees of the Garrett Collection coins), John J. Ford, Jr., Eric P. Newman and others will undoubtedly bring additional facts to light in the future.

From the Col. James W. Ellsworth Collection; earlier from the Lorin G. Parmelee Collection.

(continued—)

Unique 1783 Silver Nova Constellatio Quint



(See Color Photo)

620 **1783 Quint. 500 units. Type I. Silver pattern. 134.6 grains. Choice Uncirculated, MS-65, with prooflike surface.** This piece was quite possibly struck as a Proof. Toning is light gray.

Of the so-called "Type I" design. Obverse with the all-seeing eye surrounded by a burst of rays and a circle of stars with the inscription NOVA CONSTELLATIO. Reverse with U.S. and 500 within a circular wreath. The legend LIBERTAS JUSTITIA surrounds. The date 1783 is below. Leaf device on edge.

The pedigree of this lot and Lot 622 (the 1,000 units) is unsurpassed by any coin associated with the United States government. Its ancestry is traced to Charles Thomson, who obtained it at the time of issue. The introduction to this Nova

Constellatio silver pattern series gives the testimony of Rathmell Wilson regarding these pieces. In addition, a letter dated February 12, 1925, from S. Hudson Chapman to John W. Garrett (reproduced herewith), provides interesting details.

From Charles Thomson (secretary of the Continental Congress); subsequently to his nephew, then to his nephew's son; then to Rathmell Wilson, who sold them to John W. Haseltine in 1872; then to Henry S. Adams of Boston; then to the cabinet of Lorin G. Parmelee; then to H.B. Smith; then to the Chapman brothers; then to George H. Earle Jr.; then to Henry Chapman; then to Col. James W. Ellsworth; then to John Work Garrett.

Unique 1783 Type II Silver Nova Constellatio Quint



(See Color Photo)

- 621 **1783 Quint. 500 units. Type II.** Silver pattern. 109.6 grains. **Choice AU-55, with prooflike surface;** some surface marks. Possibly this piece was struck as a Proof, as was suggested by Walter Breen. Some very minor evidence of handling.

The design of this piece differs from the foregoing in that the obverse bears the all-seeing eye with resplendent rays and a circle of stars, but lacks the NOVA CONSTELLATIO legend.

The execution is slightly different. Apparently two varieties of the 500 units, or quint, were prepared. The present example is unique; the only known piece of this design. The edge is ornamented with a leaf device.

From the collection of Col. James W. Ellsworth; earlier owned by Lorin G. Parmelee; earlier history unknown; possibly owned at one time by Sylvester S. Crosby.

Unique 1783 Silver Nova Constellatio Mark



(See Color Photo)

- 622 **1783 Mark. 1,000 units.** Silver pattern. 268.5 grains. **Uncirculated, MS-60, prooflike.** Virtually perfect in every detail. Exceedingly sharply struck. **The first officially authorized United States silver dollar.** As the origin of the 1776 Continental dollar, usually struck in pewter, is cloudy, and as it is unknown whether or not it was minted under official authorization, the present piece represents the first American silver dollar for which specific historical information can be traced. As such, its importance, both numismatically and historically, is in-

calculable.

The pedigree is the same as that of the Type I quint:

From Charles Thomson (secretary of the Continental Congress); subsequently to his nephew, then to his nephew's son; then to Rathmell Wilson who sold them to John W. Haseltine in 1872; then to Henry S. Adams of Boston; then to the cabinet of Lorin G. Parmelee; then to H.B. Smith; then to the Chapman brothers; then to George H. Earle, Jr.; then to Henry Chapman; then to Col. James W. Ellsworth; then to John Work Garrett.

—NOTES—



Lot 546



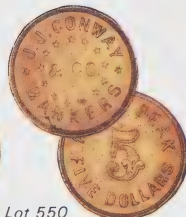
Lot 547



Lot 548



Lot 549



Lot 550



Lot 551



Lot 552



Lot 553



Lot 573



Lot 574



Lot 578



Lot 579



Lot 580



Lot 581



Lot 582



Lot 583



Lot 584



Lot 594



Lot 595



Lot 598



Lot 599



Lot 600



Lot 601



Lot 602



Lot 603



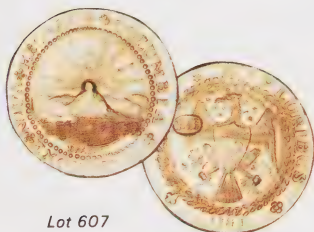
Lot 604



Lot 605



Lot 606



Lot 607



Lot 609



Lot 610



Lot 612



Lot 617



Lot 618



Lot 619



Lot 620



Lot 621



Lot 622

1783 Nova Constellatio Silver Patterns



Lot 622
1783 "Mark"



Lot 620
1783 "Quint" Type I



Lot 621
1783 "Quint" Type II



Lot 619
1783 "Bit"

(All photos enlarged)

THE PLAIN EDGE 100 MILL NOVA CONSTELLATIO

The recent publicity concerning the 5,100,500 and 1000 mill ^{denominations of the 1783} Nova Constellatio pieces has resulted in a request for further detail, ~~not~~ particularly about the plain edge 100 mill Nova.

The ^{silver} 1783 Nova Constellatio plain edge 100 mill ~~weighs~~ 26 grains and is in extremely fine condition. Its first appearance in numismatics was in the John G. Murdock Collection where the owner ^{opened} ~~stated~~ of it ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~quoted~~ ^{quoted}: "One of the rarest American coins". It was sold on July 21-29, 1903 as Lot # 905 of the John G. Murdock Estate sale by Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge ^{in London} for £ 26 to "Chapman" who was acting on behalf of John W. Garrett. It was ^{first} illustrated on Plate VII of that catalogue.

In March ~~1923~~ ¹⁹²³ ~~Garrett had~~ ^{Garrett} the ornamental edge 100 mill Nova ~~one~~ ^{was} one of the four silver Nova pieces ~~acquired~~ ^{acquired} from James W. Ellsworth (1849-1925). Garrett concluded that the plain edge 100 mill was a duplicate and ^{since it} was not ⁱⁿ quite as choice condition as his ornamental ^{edge} 100 mill ~~he~~ ^{he} turned ~~it over~~ ^{it over} the plain edge 100 mill piece to Wayne Raymond for sale. ~~Raymond~~ ^{Raymond} ~~described~~ ^{described} this situation to me personally about 30 years ago. Raymond paid Garrett \$2200 for the piece ^{after} ~~having~~ ^{having} delivered it to Guttag Brothers of New York for disposition. Guttag Brothers issued Coin Bulletin # 5 on May 2, 1923 offering to sell the coin to whomever would offer the highest price for it within three weeks thereafter.

The purchaser was Waldo C. Newcomer (1866-1934) of Baltimore ~~and thus the coin~~ ^{and thus the coin} ~~soon~~ ^{soon} after it left. ~~Newcomer~~ ^{Newcomer} found its way back to Baltimore ~~but in 1931~~ ^{but in 1931} ~~Newcomer built a fine numismatic collection~~ ^{Newcomer built a fine numismatic collection} made arrangements to sell his collection of Early American coins through B Max Mehl of Fort Worth, Texas. Mehl offered the collection ~~intact~~ ^{intact} to John W. Garrett ~~but~~ ^{but} Garrett ~~only~~ ^{only} selected a few choice varieties ~~from~~ ^{from} ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~Garrett still felt that there~~ ^{Garrett still felt that there} plain edge 100 mill. ~~was no~~ ^{was no} ~~difference~~ ^{difference} ~~from~~ ^{from} the coin he ~~had~~ ^{had} owned. Mehl valued the plain edge 100 mill Nova at \$1500 and due to the depression had a difficult

time selling the bulk of the collection. About 1932 he completed a sale of ~~the~~ ~~the~~ including the plain edge 100 mill to "Colonel" Edward Hornland Robinson Green, son of the notorious Hetty Green, the "witch of Wall Street". Green's enormous purchases of collectibles near the end of his life ~~of which~~ were guided by Wayte Raymond as to numismatic material. The Chase National Bank (now Chase Manhattan Bank) as executor was in charge of the disposition of the numismatic properties of the Green Estate and sold the plain edge 100 mill Nova along with other items to me in 1940. I was acting on behalf of my mentor, Baudette G. Johnson (St Louis Stamp & Coin Co) of St Louis and myself. On the subsequent division of the numismatic items ~~between us~~ so purchased I acquired the ^{plain edge} 100 mill Nova. Its ownership has been a source of great enjoyment to me. I donated it to the Eusebius Teroman Numismatic Education Society, a not-for-profit organization ^{organized for museum and research purposes} to maintain ~~the~~ the collection. ^{here} I had the pleasure of assembling ^{and} the coin before it was

As to the prior history of the coin before it was acquired by Murdoch there are matters which are somewhat ~~quite~~ speculative. The reason this coin and the ~~also~~ ornamented edge 100 mill piece were found in England ~~was~~ ^{could have been} for the purpose of the design being copied for the Nova Constellatio non-denominational as well as 1786 (the 1786 ~~is now dated as a forgery~~ ^{will be discussed separately}) do not seem to have been coined in 1783 because the first references to them ~~were~~ ^{were} in English and American newspapers in 1786. See: Eric P. Newman "The Source of the Nova Constellatio Copper Coinage", Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine, January 1960, p. 6; Colonial Newsletter, October 1973, p. 4 ~~vv~~.

The reason some of the coppers were dated 1783 could have been because of instructions that they were to be copied from the submitted silver piece or pieces of that date. This is somewhat reinforced by the fact that the 1783 coppers have a block letter U.S. just as the ~~American~~ ^{silver} ~~pieces~~ ^{pieces} have and the subsequent change ~~in the design~~ ^{to U.S. script letters} was ~~on the 1st of January 1785~~ ^{the dies bearing 1785 as the date} ~~the dies bearing 1785 as the date~~

It is also possible that more than one of the 100 mill pieces were sent to Birmingham, England so that separate mailings or shipments for each would assure the delivery of one was lost as this was a common procedure at that time. The ^{silver} pieces of the smaller denomination could have been selected because they were safer for such a purpose and could have been obtained by Gouverneur Morris through Robert Morris from Charles Thompson.

It is also possible that more than one 100 mill piece was sent to England in an effort to submitting the ~~production~~ ^{contract} to ~~two~~ more than one coinier. ~~there were~~

One ~~uncommented~~ ^{uncommented} literary reference to the Silver Novas went unmentioned in the recent published observations. That was an article devoted to them in the Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine of July 25, 1972 ghost written by Russell Pulaw. That article included much historical material relating to the plain edged 100 mill as well as the other Silver Novas.

There is also an early reference which might ~~the~~ relate to the ^{plain edge} 100 mill Nova. In the American Journal of Numismatics for July 1890, p. 30 it is stated

"Lots 580 to 583 were started at an upset price of \$1000 by Smith, and went by alternate bids of 25 and 100 from Chapman and Smith to 1310 when the latter bid 1350 and took it. These pieces were the set of Nova Constellation, 1000, 500(2) and 100 Mills; it is called unique in the Catalogue, but we hear that Mr. Crosby says there is another of the 1000 Mills, not so good;

Crosby may have been referring to another 100 mill piece rather than ~~the~~ ^{the} 1000 mill piece and a misunderstanding or typographical error resulted. Crosby used the words "there is another" and he as an experienced and careful researcher would not be fooled by an electrotypes or repeat a ~~statement based upon~~ third party opinion. Muddock's plain edge 100 mill piece was actually not in as nice condition as the ornamented edge 100 mill piece. There never has been another 1000 mill piece and the records show there can be none. He may have been in communication with Muddock and that is the only coin he could refer to make the remark he did ~~that there was~~ challenging the uniqueness of the Silver Novas.

The question of whether the ~~the~~ denominational Novas are the "first coin struck as an American coin" as Robert Morris stated is a ~~one~~ ^{stimulating} one. ~~American~~ United States paper money was printed and circulated by the Continental Congress from 1775 through 1779 ~~both before and~~ this being both before and after the Declaration of Independence and ~~even under~~ the name United States in 1779 before and after the adoption ^{in 1777} of the Articles of Confederation, the ~~the~~ ^{with denominations printed by only} ~~Novas~~ ^{are} ~~one~~ ^{pattern} ~~coins~~ ^{being} ~~were never approved for circulation~~ ^{proposed for} ~~neither the coinage nor the theory for the coinage~~ ^{production for} ~~approved~~ ^{rejected} and no circulation undertaken.

The Novas are therefore not the first ~~officially~~ ^{officially} ~~sponsored~~ ^{sponsored} money for ~~of~~ the United States. Are they the first ~~officially~~ ^{officially} ~~sponsored~~ ^{sponsored} coins?

As to whether they are the first official patterns of the United States the Continental Dollar Coinage of 1776 must be considered. The ~~the~~ copper, tin and silver pieces in various die states were ~~from~~ ^{from} dies cut in ~~by~~ ^{by} Elisha Gallaudet, carried ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{official} legends of "Continental Currency" ~~and~~ ^{United States and} "American Congress", and contained designs copied from the issued ~~the~~ American paper money.

(See: ~~Continental~~ ^{Curtis} C. Newman, The 1776 Continental Currency Coinage, Coin Collector's Journal

The Early Paper Money of America, 1967 and 1976)

While no documentation has as yet been discovered about the coined Continental Dollars there was a definite ^{of coordination} plan ^{with the paper money} for the coinage. The Continental Congress specifically eliminated only the \$1 ^{paper money} denomination for four authorizations beginning July 22, 1776. The one dollar denomination was the most practical ^{of all denominations} for circulation and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~elimination~~ ^{elimination} began during a period before any depreciation in value of Continental Currency had taken place. The official action has no other logical explanation than the ~~the~~ ^{the} conclusion that a \$1 coin would be ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~available~~ ^{available}. Like many other numismatic historical problems the matter needs further facts for a clearer resolution sufficient to satisfy or destroy this conclusion.

the non denominational Nova Constellatio
coppers have a variety dated 1786. ~~There are~~
There are ~~very~~ few known ~~and they are~~ None are
choice and most examples ~~are~~ have unreadable
areas from poor striking. The die workmanship
does not measure up to the 1783 and 1785 varieties.
Some numismatists consider these 1786 pieces as
circulating counterfeits. ~~Since the~~ Although I
have no opinion on this point I can ~~see~~ observe
that since ~~the~~ you cannot counterfeit ~~it~~ could
legally copy an unauthorized token the words
"circulating counterfeit" ~~should not apply~~ or "counterfeit" should
not apply. ~~It~~ It was not a forgery or
spurious piece made for collectors.
This same logic applies to a

~~In addition to~~ ^{Robert} Morris coinage proposal was still
under ~~consideration~~ ^{logical} as a Federal coinage
project and would not have been ~~interfered~~ ^{interfered}
with ~~by the private coinage of coppers of similar design.~~
by its own supporters ~~as a private coinage project~~
of similar design. ~~Neither Bartlett nor Curwen had~~
~~any reason to be interested in coinage for United States~~
~~circulation in the United States,~~
~~a curious interest in~~
~~the~~ no reason to get involved in a commercial
venture for the production of coinage for circulation
in the United States. ~~Curwen was as a~~
~~Bartlett and Bartlett~~ ^{growing} Tory sympathies would not
~~be selected for the purpose~~ have been selected to
~~take the 5 mill Nova to English coiners for copying.~~

cle

scrapbook must

may 72

outlines ~~EE~~

set 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ picas

The silver mark ~~has~~ ^{has the} legend NOVA CONSTELLATIO and an eye emitting rays toward 13 six-pointed stars, ~~and a wreath of leaves.~~ Reverse contains ^{the} legend LIBERTAS JUSTITIA, date 1783, and within a ^{of leaves,} wreath, U.S. 1,000. The piece weighs 17.5 grams; ^{floated edge;} ~~only one piece is~~ unique, ~~known.~~

-0-

Two varieties of the quint are known. One is similar to the mark, ^{and} ~~but~~ weighs 8.75 grams, and under U.S. on the reverse, has the ^{other} value 500. The obverse variety has ^{no legend on the face with} eye, rays and stars, ~~but no~~ ^{Each has a floated edge and} legend, weighs 7.13 grams. ~~Only one piece is known.~~ is unique.

-0-

^{or "Bit"} "Cent," ^{or 100 units} valued at 1/10 of a mark, in the system proposed by Morris, ~~is one of two specimens known.~~ ^{One variety has a} floated edge. ^{The other has a plain edge.} Each is unique.

-0-

Nova Constellatio copper dated 1786, ^{The dies from which this} ~~last year the pieces~~ ^{piece is struck are so poorly cut as to indicate these coppers} were made in England. Only about a dozen specimens are known of this ~~date.~~ ^{American imitations made for circulation. About 12 specimens are known}

-0-

NOVA CONSTELLATIO appears on this quint, of 500 units in the proposed coinage system of the United States. More than \$1,600 was spent in developing these coins, for die expenditure and Mint construction.

-0-

more -1-

clc libbi Nova Constellatio New Constellation
 Shbbe Morris Blazes Trail with Pattern Coins
scrapbook must

may 72

"Mark" and "quint" would have been as common terms as "dollar" and "cents" are, had early plans for American money envisioned by Robert Morris been retained.

What has been termed "the first American silver coinage" was ~~agreed~~ ^{proposed} ~~in 1783~~ ^{in 1782} under authority of the Continental Congress ~~dated and~~ ^{acting} ~~February 21, 1782~~ ^{planned} to a great extent by Gouverneur Morris under the direction ~~of the~~ ^{of the} superintendent of finance ~~under the Articles~~ ^{acting} of Confederation ~~Robert Morris (no relation)~~.

Jared Sparks, in his biography, "Life of Gouverneur Morris," ^{dated} ~~published~~ in 1832, wrote "The various coins which have circulated in America have undergone different changes in their value, so that there is hardly any which can be considered as a general standard, unless it be Spanish dollars. These pass in Georgia at five shillings in North Carolina and New York at eight shillings, in Virginia and the four eastern states at six shillings, and in all the other states, excepting South Carolina, at seven shillings and sixpence, and in South Carolina at 32 shillings and sixpence."

"The money unit of a new coin to agree without a fraction with all these different values of a dollar, excepted the last, will be the 1,440th part of a dollar, equal to the 1,600 part of a crown. Of these units, 24 will be a penny of Georgia, 15 will be a penny of North Carolina or New York, 20 will be a penny of Virginia and the

No 11

they were part of ~~the~~ a plan to establish the first Mint of the United States.

The numismatic public did not know that these coins even existed until 1867 and when they began to appear and ~~they were discovered by the numismatic public to exist and their subsequent history finds them in the hands of one of the most dedicated group of numismatists one could select. In a~~
All of ~~the~~ the coins have the unusual status of being unique.

cutlines BF

Set 28 picas

The American State Papers record proposals of gold, silver and copper coins of relative weights and values as reflected in the above chart. Proposed coin denominations were not named; values were given in a ratio to both Pennsylvania and Virginia currency.

-0-

The Continental Congress authorized payment of Mint construction and die preparation in 1783 as reflected in the above table. It was customary ^{at that time in the middle Atlantic states} ~~in those days~~ to express fractions of a dollar in 90ths instead of cents; at left, above, is a note issued by the Bank of North America in the value of 1/90th dollar. ~~Note at right is from Rhode Island, valued at 1/9th of a dollar (or eight pence) issue dated May 22, 1777.~~ (Eric ^{P.}Newman collection)

-0-

This from the book -
Should we get copyright
release? No is OK

not
applicable
 $\frac{1}{9}$ and $\frac{1}{90}$
bear no relationship
in denomination
even tho one is $\frac{1}{10}$ th
of the other

"Pointed rays - Small US" variety of copper Nova Constellatio
struck in England and circulated in the ^{United States} ^{about 1785} beginning in 1786 is seen

~~above.~~ Three reverses used for copper Nova Constellatio pieces were
~~later~~ "muled" with IMMUNE COLUMBIA patterns ^{until} 1785.

-0-

omit this is a repeat [Largest of the Philadelphia-struck silver coins in the
"Mint of North America" was the mark, which was based on 1,000
units. Only extant silver Nova Constellatio pieces known are in
the Johns Hopkins University collection.

-0-

four eastern states, 16 will be a penny of all the other states, excepting South Carolina, and 48 will be 13 pence of South Carolina.

"It has already been observed that to have the money unit very small is advantageous to commerce; but there is no necessity that this money unit be exactly represented in coin; it is sufficient that its value be precisely known. On the present occasion, two copper coins will be proper, the one of eight units, and the other of five. These may be called an Eight and a Five.

"Two of the former will make a penny, proclamation or Pennsylvania money, and three a penny Georgia money. Of the latter, three will make a penny New York money, and four a penny lawful, or Virginia money.

"The money unit will be equal to a quarter of a grain of fine silver in coined money. Proceeding thence in a decimal ratio, 100 would be the lowest silver coin, and might be called a cent. It would contain 25 grains of fine silver, to which may be added two grains of copper, and the whole would weigh one pennyweight and three grains. Five of these would make a quint, or 500 units, weighing five pennyweight and 15 grains; and 10 would make a mark, or 1,000 units, weighing 11 pennyweight and six grains."

On February 21, 1782, an entry in the Journal of Congress read: "On the report of a committee of the States consisting of Mr. Livermore, Mr. Patridge, Mr. Cornell, Mr. Wolcott, Mr. Floyd, Mr. Clark, Mr. Clymer, Mr. Carroll, Mr. J. Jones, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Middleton, Mr. Telfair, to whom was referred a letter of the 15th of January, from the superintendent of finance, touching the establishment of the Mint:

~~REXX~~

"Resolved, that Congress approve of the establishment of a Mint; and, that the superintendent of finance be, and hereby is directed to prepare and report to Congress a plan for establishing and conducting the same."

Thomas Jefferson, who represented Virginia in the Continental Congress under the Articles of Confederation, conferred with Gouverneur Morris on the matter of the proposed coinage. ^{Jefferson} said, "He seems to concur with me, in thinking his smallest fractional division too minute for a unit, and therefore, proposes to transfer that denomination to his largest silver coin, containing 1,000 of the units first proposed, and worth about four shillings twopence lawful, or 25/36ths of a dollar. The only question then remaining between us is, whether the dollar, or this coin, be best for the unit. We both agree that the ease of adoption with the people is the thing to be aimed at."

Sylvester S. Crosby, in "The Early Coins of America," published in 1875 in Boston, Massachusetts, explains one system devised by Morris, as follows: "One crown, or \$10, equal to 10,000; \$1 or 10 ^{bits} ~~bills~~ (bills or bits), equal to 1,000; one bill ^{bit} ~~(bill or bit)~~ or 10 pence, equal to 100; one penny, or 10 quarters, equal to 10; one quarter, equal to one."

^{had} Morris said, "The value of the quarter is equal to a quarter of a grain of pure silver, or 1,440th part of a Spanish dollar. This was his first plan of a new coinage, founded on the principle of decimals and a money unit. The largest piece, or crown, was to be of gold; the next, or dollar, of silver." Morris visualized a design on the American gold crown of an Indian, with his bow in his left hand, and in his right hand thirteen arrows, and his right foot on a crown;

the inscription, MANUS INIMICA TYRANNIS.

[The Morris system was later reevaluated, as explained in a letter to Dr. Ramsey, a member of the Board of Treasury. It was to be based on a unit equal to 12 shillings sixpence sterling, called a pound, divisible by 10, with one pound equal to 1,000; one shilling equal to 100; one penny equal to 10; and one doit equal to one.

[Coins visualized by Morris on this system included a gold-crown of 1,200 doits; half crown, 600 doits; silver dollar, 300 doits; shilling, 100 doits; groat, 20 doits; and a copper doit.

[The diary of Robert Morris tells of the progress of the coins struck under the ^{experimental} ~~aegis of the Morris~~ ^{authorization of Congress} and ~~Jefferson~~.

[April 2, 1783. "I sent for Mr. Dudley, who delivered me a piece of Silver Coin, being the first that has been struck as an American ~~Coin~~." The Continental Congress had ^{also} ~~only~~ asked for plans, ^{and model} ~~for a Mint on February 21, 1782, according to the journal report~~ ^{and for rolling equipment} already quoted.

[April 16. "Sent for Mr. Dudley ^{and} urged ^{him to produce the} ~~him to produce the~~ coins to lay before Congress to establish a Mint."

[April 17. "Sent for Mr. Dudley to urge the preparing of coins etc. for establishing a Mint."

[April 22. "Mr. Dudley sent in several pieces of money as patterns of the intended American coins."

[July 5. "Mr. Benjamin Dudley also informs of a minting press being in New York for sale, and urges me to purchase it for the use of the American Mint."

[July 7. "Mr. Dudley, respecting the minting press, but I had not time to see him."

2
On April 23, 1783 Robert Morris ^{included in} ~~the~~ letter to
the President of Congress, "I now enclose specimens
of ~~the~~ a coin, with a view that if Congress should
think proper to appoint a committee on the subject,
I may have the honor of conferring with them and
explaining my ideas of the plan for establishing and
conducting a mint"

The diary continues:

August 19. "I sent for Mr. Benjamin Dudley, and informed him of my doubts about the establishment of a Mint and desired him to think of some employment in private service, in which I am willing to assist him all in my power. I told him to make out an account for the services he had performed for the public, and submit at the Treasury office for inspection and settlement."

August 30. "Mr. Dudley brought the dies for coining in the American Mint."

Crosby cites differences in the die work of the larger coin, the mark, and the ~~quint~~ ^{quint}. ~~the mark~~ ^{the mark}. The mark dies were apparently cut by hand, while the work on the quint was from punches. ~~the bit or cent was not yet known to exist.~~

The diary of Samuel Curwen, under date of May 15, 1784, describes what was called a medal: "Mr. Bartlet presented me with a medal struck in Philadelphia; in a round compartment stands US 5 1783; round, LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA; on the other side, in the center, an eye surrounded by a glory; the whole encompassed by 13 stars, with the legend NOVA CONSTELLATIO." *While a 5 unit copper piece is called for under the proposal, no example has ever been located. It is*

some legend and While the Nova Constellatio silver patterns ~~the~~ ^{unofficial} design appeared on two more series of coins associated with the American ~~states~~ ^{states}: — ~~copper~~ ^{copper} ~~without denomination and~~ ^{without denomination and}

Charles Ira Bushnell, New York City numismatist who died on September 17, 1880, wrote of the copper Nova Constellatio pieces in his "Numismatic Notes," "The Nova Constellatio were made in Birmingham, in England, and the dies were cut by Wyon, of that place. Over 40 tons were issued from one die alone, and many more from another. They were manufactured by order of a gentleman of New York, who is believed to have been Gouverneur Morris."

Dudley was frustrated by the lack of action. Although he remained in Philadelphia long enough to be described as the only person in North America capable of making coin dies. About July, 1785 he opened a clock and watch shop in Newport, Rhode Island selling "perpetual motion clocks", barometers, microscopes, telescopes, etc. ~~He is mentioned as the only person capable of making coin dies.~~

probably not coined because a total of eight dies were made by Dudley and seven are accounted for in the silver coinage. Perhaps Curwen made a slight error in his diary entry.

[Eric P. Newman, St. Louis, Missouri, writing in the January 1960 Scrapbook, ^gobserved, "While one enthusiast has searched the newspaper files in the British Museum for the 'paragraph' which gave rise to this comment, for the moment it remains elusive. However, the English source of the Nova Constellatio coppers is specifically confirmed along with the fact that the coinage was a private business venture undertaken by a New York merchant.

["Gouverneur Morris undoubtedly ^{the} qualified as a New York merchant. As assistant to the superintendent of Finance of the United States he was the author of the decimal coinage plan submitted by Robert Morris to the Continental Congress on January 15, 1782, and pursuant thereto developed the denominations and sizes for the coinage of the Nova Constellatio silver patterns of 1783. ~~the~~

["The design of the Nova Constellatio coppers was copied directly from the silver patterns and no one other than the group connected with the Mint of North America would have had access to those patterns (five specimens exist) or to the four pairs of dies from which they were struck.

["There would have been vigorous complaints from both Robert Morris or Gouverneur Morris if someone else had privately appropriated the Nova Constellatio design without permission. The conclusion ⁽³⁾ is almost inescapable that Gouverneur Morris was the New York merchant referred to.

["Although some Nova Constellatio coppers dated 1783 may have been introduced into American circulation before 1785 the quantity was at best quite limited. This is shown by announcements in American newspaper in 1786 indicating no previous knowledge of the coppers.

Newman has since located the item which needed correction and which appeared in several English newspapers early in 1786. It stated:

" The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, "LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA;" round a central cypher U.S. -- On the reverse is a sun rising amidst Thirteen Stars, circularly inscribed "CONSTELLATIO NOVA!" "

Newman commented further in ^{the} 1960 Scrapbook article,

[Robert A. Vlack, in "Early American Coins," writes "The Nova Constellatio coppers were struck at Birmingham, England, during the years 1783 to 1785. No specimens are known of 1784. The engraving of the dies has been attributed to Thomas Wyon. This attribution is valid because of identical letter punches used by him on other early American coinage, the dies of which are known to have been engraved by him. The large quantity of these struck by order of Gouverneur Morris of New York, who apparently intended them as a currency for either New York, or for all of America.

["With the large numbers of the 1783 and 1785 issue known, it is assumed that the quantity ordered had been fulfilled using these dies. However, there are a few specimens known with the date of 1786. Of this date there are less than a dozen known. The authenticity of these specimens is certainly questionable."

~~[It is interesting to note that the NOVA CONSTELLATIO side of the copper dies was used as one side of the IMMUNE COLUMBIA pattern coppers.]~~

[One of the earliest published reports of the copper pieces appeared in the London Morning Chronicle dated March 16, 1786, and was republished in the New York Daily Advertiser May 26, 1786.

["A correspondent observes, that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers respecting a copper coinage in America is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA was not made in America, nor by the direction of Congress. It was coined at Birmingham, by the order of a merchant in New York, Many tons were struck from this die, and many from another; they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit half pence are in England."

["A similar announcement had been made in the New Haven Gazette of May 4, 1786. It will be noted that the source of the coins in these earlier statements is Greenwich, near London, rather than Birmingham, but the English origin is undisputed." Newman wrote

[On March 29, 1786, the Essex Journal and Massachusetts and New Hampshire General Advertiser attempted to ~~xxx~~ encourage issuance of copper coinage in Massachusetts when they carried the following story.

["New York, Connecticut and Vermont have authorized a person in each of those states to coin coppers; number of them are now in circulation; they are in general well-made, and of good copper, those of New York in particular. Was a person authorized in this state for the same purpose, it would undoubtedly prevent the manufacturing of those made of base metal."

[Newman observes, "It was erroneously thought by the writer of the above excerpt that the state of New York had authorized copper coinage. The New York coinage referred to had to be the Nova Constellatio ⁽¹⁾ coinage as there are no coppers attributable to New York dated 1786 or earlier, except the 1786 Non vi Virtute Vici which is weak in detail and from its rarity only a few could have made their appearance. The comment that the coppers were particularly well made indicates they are superior to the earlier series of Connecticut and Vermont coppers.

["Specimens of 1783 Nova Constellatio copper coins are found beautifully and clearly struck on well-made planchets and varieties. Crosby 2-B and 3-C are known in such superb condition that they could now be classified as proofs. This quality of copper ^{is} further evidence of their English origin, as such work could not then have been accomplished in America.

"The dies for the Nova Constellation coppers were prepared subsequently to and separately from the Mint of North America project. Of the eight dies officially prepared at the Mint of North America seven are accounted for in the known silver patterns. The missing one should be the mate to the obverse die of the quint of 500 units which obverse lacks any legend.

"If any die for either of the specified copper coins (five units or eight units) under the Morris proposal had been cut by the Mint of North America artisans it would have needed a denomination on it in like manner to the silver pieces in order for the coin to be acceptable for introduction to the accomodation of multiple exchange ratios. Since no known variety of a Nova Constellatio copper has a denomination upon it none could be a ^(a)prt of the Mint of North America activity.

"Crosby listed three reverse dies of 1783, five reverse dies of 1785 and one reverse die of 1786. He classified eight obverse dies, one of which is used both with the 1783 reverse (3-C) and with a 1785 reverse (1-B), tying these two groups together. The only other known Nova Constellation variety (excluding the Immune Columbia combinations) is a rare 1785 copper struck from crudely made dies with only 12 stars and rays ('Empire topics,' by Walter Breen, Summer 1958, Number 2, page 18), apparently an American-made imitation of the period.

"The 1783 and 1785 coppers are known today in sufficient quantity to indicate a very large production from a limited number of dies. This would have been possible only in England and not in America. Their copper content was so free of impurities that many were subsequently overstruck in the making of Vermont and Connecticut copper coinage.

"Bushnell's Numismatic Notes" (Sylvester S. Crosby, "Early Coin of America," Boston, 1873, page 331) specifically state that Thomas Wyon cut the dies for the Nova Constellation coppers in Birmingham. Although Bushnell's accuracy on numismatic matters has often been questioned where a coin in his own collection was involved it is reasonable to accept his designation of the die cutter of a set of common coppers as he was in contact with many English numismatists who knew such facts.

"The conclusion to be drawn is that the Nova Constellation coppers were struck in Birmingham from dies made there by Thomas Wyon; that they were imported for American circulation as a private business venture of Gouverneur Morris of New York, and that they had no relationship to the coinage of the Mint of North America other than being a copy of the design of its silver patterns." *Newman Said*

The Continental Congress gave the "^(de)Coup ~~de~~ Grace" to the Nova Constellation coin and its fractions on July 6, 1785, when the following entry was made in the Journal of Congress:

"Resolved, that money unit of the United States of America be one dollar.

"Resolved, that the smallest coin be a copper, of which 200 shall pass for one dollar.

"Resolved, that the several pieces shall increase in a decimal ratio."

While many might consider reading ^{old numismatic magazines and} auction catalogs a dull pastime, it is interesting to trace sale of ^{the} silver and copper Nova Constellation pieces through auction sales in the 19th century. *from owner to owner.*

In the sale of the Joseph J. Mickley collection
a 1000 ~~unit~~ ^{unit} and a 500 ~~unit~~ ^{unit} piece in soft
metal and not silver were sold as lots
2338 & 2339 for \$70 and \$32 respectively to
William Appleton of Boston.
These were nothing more than electrotypes copies but Appleton
~~from the amount of his profit~~ ^{must have thought otherwise.}
~~that they were the earliest~~ ^{the electros} are the earliest ~~and~~ ^{the evidence that}
~~of the existence of the type~~ ^{actually} two of the genuine pieces existed.
Mickley must have been in touch with the Thomson family,
but was unable to acquire the ^{genuine} pieces from them.

2341, 1783, uncirculated, \$112, to Clemens;

→ 2342, 1783, small US, uncirculated, \$100, Nichols;

→ 2343, 1783, large US, very fine, \$100, Nichols;

→ 2344, 1783, Nova Constelatio (sic) sun, with blunt rays, fine, \$125,
Sanford;

→ 2345, 1783, uncirculated, \$113, Marshall;

2346, 1785, Nova Constellatio, US in script, very fine, \$112, Hoffman;

→ 2347, 1785, very fine, \$100, Nichols;

→ 2348, 1785, fine, \$100, Fellows;

→ 2349, three Nova Constellations, "both dates, all different varieties,
all good, two being uncirculated; a desirable lot," \$150, Gschwendt.

Also in the sale were Rosa Americana farthings, halfpennies,
and penny and Barcents and half cents.

On December 6, 1868, Henry Richard Linderman, Director of the
Mint, corresponded with Appleton in an effort to add information to
a book under preparation. Linderman's volume was published in 1878,
"Money and Legal Tender in the United States."

~~The story~~
The stones as to the ^{first} appearance of the silver Nova Constellation are ~~amazing~~ ^{curious}. The mark and the quint with legend are from ~~the~~ one source, the quint without the legend from another, and each of the bit pieces has its separate origin in ~~England and the British~~ Great Britain.

[Crosby quotes a letter addressed to John W. Haseltine from Rathmell Wilson, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, dated May 28, 1872, as follows:

"Dear Sir. The history of the two coins which you obtained from me, viz. Nova Constellatio 1783, U.S. 1,000, Nova Constellatio, 1783, U.S. 500 is as follows.

"They were the property of the Hon. Charles Thomson, secretary of the first Congress. At his death his property was left by will to his nephew, John Thomson, of Newark, state of Delaware. These two coins were found in the desk of the said deceased Charles Thomson, and preserved by his nephew during his life; at his death they came into the possession of his son Samuel E. Thomson of Newark, Delaware, from whom I received them. So you will perceive that their genuineness cannot be questioned; as they were never out of the possession of the Thomson family, until I received them."

~~Later,~~ The two coins described in the letter and the letter were purchased from Haseltine by Henry S. Adams in 1872.

A Glasgow, Scotland, auction was reported in the April 1885 issue of the "American Journal of Numismatics," where a silver ~~bit~~ ^{or} 100 unit ~~bit~~ Nova Constellatio piece was offered.

The AJN story reads "the bit has hitherto remained undiscovered until within a few months: at the sale by auction in Scotland of the cabinet of a collector recently deceased, one turned up as an unknown coin, and was purchased by a dealer for the large sum of 15 pounds 15 shillings; at which price, with 10 per cent added, it was offered to a prominent collector in England, by whom it was sent to an American dealer, for advice as to its rarity, genuineness, value etc. It was returned with a liberal offer, and now having found its way across the Atlantic for a fourth time, it is offered for sale in

The mark and ^{with legend} quint were joined by the ^{quint, without} ~~quint~~ legend in the Sylvester Crosby collection. ~~These stayed~~ together ^{and were} joined by the bit in 1886 ^{through} ~~the~~ Lorin G Parmelee's efforts.

The mark, ^{just} quints and ^{the} bit silver Nova Constellatio ^{pieces} were offered as a set for the first time in ^{1890 at the Parmelee sale.} ~~the~~ Philadelphia, ~~the~~ numismatists ^{C. Seabers,} S. H. and Henry Chapman ^{wrote} a letter to James W. Ellsworth, ^{in 1901 and stated} "The set are unique individually and collectively and are the greatest American coins extant -- price is not too much, \$4,200 for the set. They cannot be duplicated and when their great historical interest is considered, are priceless." This letter is now owned by Harry Gittelson, Merrick, New York. At the time ^{the letter} ~~it~~ was written ^{the existence of a} ~~the~~ bit without ^{the} floreated edge ~~was~~ ~~not known to Americans~~ had not been disclosed to numismatists in America. The ^{unusual history} ~~of each of the two~~ ^{100 mill or bit} pieces ~~(that followed the bit)~~ ~~is most unusual and cannot~~ ~~be included in this story~~ must interrupt our story at this time.

In March, 1885 Edouard Frossard, editor of Numisma, announced the discovery of the silver ¹⁷⁸³ Nova Constellatio 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} or bit with a floreated edge. It had been mentioned in the Morris report of 1782 but had not been theretofore located. The coin had originally been bought from T. F. Cloud, a London pawnbroker, for 2sh 3d by a Glasgow, Scotland collector. On his death it was sold at auction for £15 15sh to a Scotch coin dealer who submitted it to Edward Shorthouse, a Birmingham, ~~to~~ England collector of American coins, for an opinion. Shorthouse sent it to W. Elliot Woodward of Boston whose offer to buy it was accepted.

The discovery was also announced in the American Journal of Numismatics in April, 1885 and further data was published in April, 1887 and in July, 1890. Shorthouse indicated that the existence of the 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} piece was suspected ever since the Mickley sale in 1867 because the existence of the Mark and the ~~Mark~~ Quint was then confirmed even though only electrotypes copies were in the Mickley collection.

The W. Elliot Woodward sale of April 2, 1885 offered the 100 mill but the coin was withdrawn for not bringing a minimum of \$550.00. It was reoffered in Woodward's April 27, 1886 sale without reserve and ~~it~~ was bought by Lorin S. Parmelee for \$272.⁰⁰

The silver ¹⁷⁸³ Nova Constellatio 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} or bit with a plain edge first appeared in the John G. Murch collection which was sold by Sotheby in London on July 21, 1903. This piece was described by Murch as "One of the rarest American coins". John W. Garrett of Baltimore was the highest bidder ^{at the sale}. In 1905 Garrett was able to purchase the set of four silver Nova Constellatio coins with floreated edges from James W. Ellsworth and by doing so ~~acquired~~ owned all fine known specimens of the silver 1783 coinage. Either not realizing or not concerned with the fact that ~~the~~ one 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} piece had a floreated milled edge and the other ^{had} a plain edge Garrett asked Wayne Raymond to sell the "duplicate". Raymond found Waldo C. Newcomer, another Baltimore collector, an eager buyer. When the American portion of the Newcomer collection was sold in 1931 through B. Max Mehl, the plain edge 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} piece was purchased by Col. Edward H. R. Green, the son of "The Witch of Wall Street", Betty Green. ~~But~~ On the

liquidation of Green's estate in 1940, Bndette H. Johnson, the St Louis coin dealer, and Eric P. Newman, St Louis collector, working together arranged for Newman to buy the plain edged ~~the~~ Nova Constellatio bit. It was removed from the bank vault for exhibition at the dedication of the fourth United States Mint in Philadelphia in 1969.

The 100 ~~mill~~ ^{unt} with the plain edge was apparently coined in that manner because the milling of ^a the floreated edge ^{now so thin a coin} ~~on the other~~ was unsatisfactory ~~as the edge design was too wide~~.

On Garrett's ~~the~~ death in 1942 he bequeathed his set of four silver Nova Constellation pieces with floreated edges to Johns Hopkins University where they ~~constitute some of the early~~ highlight the early American rarities in that collection.

A table of the provenance or pedigree of all of the silver pieces ~~is~~ follows:

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